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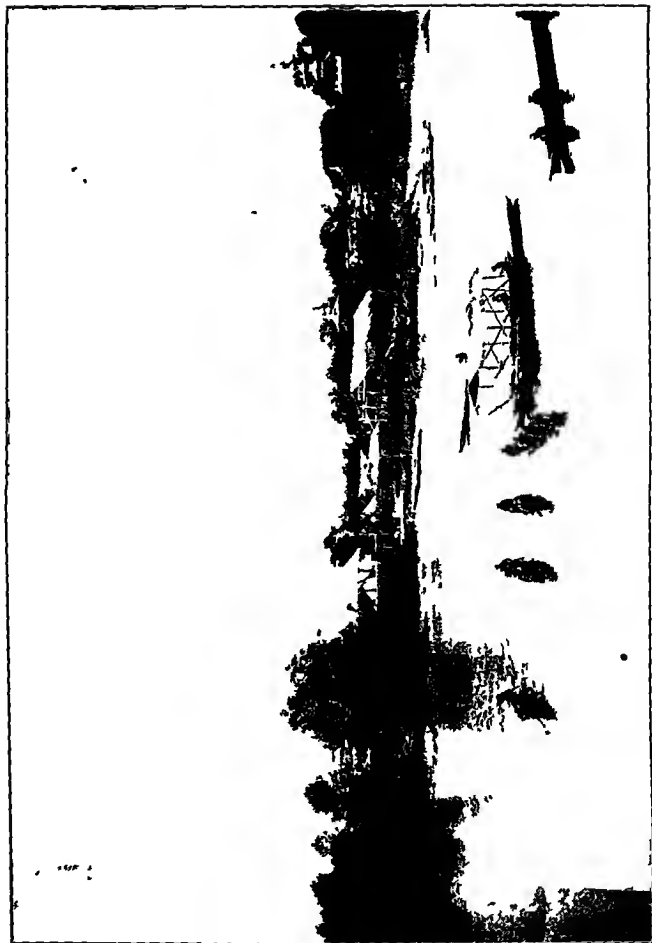
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# THE TALAINGS

BY

R. HALLIDAY



RANGOON

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## PREFACE

IN attempting the description of the Talaing people in the following pages, it has been my fortune to be going in and out amongst the remnant of the exiles in Siam. That this has been an advantage I hope will appear in the result. It has been possible, by comparing the people in the alien land with their compatriots in the homeland, to come at a better understanding of things which claim the Talaings as a separate people. It is not always possible in Burma to say what has been inherited by the Talaings from their ancestors and what has been introduced from the Burmese.

It may at the same time have been a disadvantage not to be able occasionally to verify things from actual contact with the people in Burma. I have not, however, been without help of the kind, as I have had a Burma Talaing with me all the time, to whom I have constantly referred when any particular question arose. For the use of native books I have possibly been in a better position than I could have been in Burma. The monks in a number of Talaing monasteries have been very obliging.

It has been an advantage to me to have ready access to the National Library in Bangkok. H.R.H. Prince Damrong bade me make free use of whatever I could find helpful there. Dr. Frankfurter, the learned curator, has been very obliging in affording me help in getting at information; and his Mon assistant, Phra Tepalok, has been ready to aid in any way he could. For all this I am very thankful.

The system followed in representing Talaing words is one that commends itself to some scholars. The Talaing spelling is simply followed and the equivalents of the Indian

alphabets given in Roman character. No attempt is made to give any phonetic representation, except in one or two cases where an indication of the sound follows the ordinary spelling. Readers who know Talaing can thus read according to the dialect they have learned. Attempts to spell phonetically are not very successful and often tend to perpetuate mere provincialisms. Besides, for Indian words, the spelling according to letters is better. Mr. Blagden's paper on Talaing Phonetics in the *Journal Asiatique*, 1910, is the best treatment of the subject I have seen, and may be recommended to those who can avail themselves of its help.

R. HALLIDAY.

NAKON PATHOM,  
*December, 1913.*

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# THE TALAINGS

## SECTION I.

### DISTRIBUTION.

ACCORDING to the census of 1911 the Talaings in Burma numbered 320,629, though not more than half that number were returned as using the racial language. In Siam, where thousands at different times fled for refuge from Burmese oppression during the two centuries preceding the British occupation of Tenasserim, there are said to be 60,000. This small remnant is all that is left of the people who at one time formed a powerful kingdom which was dominant all over Lower Burma from Bassein on the west to Moulmein on the east and away south to Tenasserim. The total number of Talaings as given above could only have formed a small fraction of the people from whom were drawn the great armies which their kings led forth to battle with the neighbouring nations. The country was greatly depopulated by the devastating wars carried on by the later kings, and the Talaings themselves have been largely merged into their Burmese conquerors. The thousands who at different times fled into Siam found a ready welcome and a haven of refuge. One of the historical or quasi-historical books tells of a letter which was prepared to be sent to the king of Siam and in which these words occur: "The Lord of the golden prasāda, the righteous king of Ayuthia, is the haven of the Mon race. He saves the lives of the Mon people on every occasion." The way in which Talaing refugees have been treated in Siam justifies these words.

The Talaings in Burma, who retain the use of their own language and keep up their separate nationality, are found chiefly in the Thatôn and Amherst districts. In Siam they are found chiefly on the Menam and Meklawng rivers, living in separate villages and maintaining their own customs.

The race name of this people is Mon and in Siam they are known popularly by that name alone. In Siamese books the form *Rāmañ* from *Rāmaññadesa*, the classical name for Lower Burma, is also found. I understand from Mr. Blagden that the form *Raman* or *Rman* occurs in the Talaing portion of the *Kalyānī* inscriptions of Pegu. It is found also in a copper plate with Talaing inscription, commemorating the founding of a pagoda by *Bañā Rām*, the son of *Dhammaceti*, preserved in the National Library at Bangkok. In Talaing books usually, and in ordinary Talaing speech, the name *Mon* only is used. The Talaings have a tradition of three Mons, that is, three tribes of Mons, the names of which are given as *Mon Duin*, *Mon Da*, *Mon Ña*, but there seems to be no adequate explanation of what is meant; nor does any one seem to know of any such actual tribal distinction. The phrase *Mon pi*, the three Mons, occurs frequently in the books. In the Pegu *Rājāwañ* of the Monk of Aswo' there is a reference to *Raḥ Mon pi* (land of the three Mons) as the destination of some relics of the Buddha. Father Schmidt, commenting on the passage, makes *mon* = Pali *manto*, Sans. *mantra*, which, on the authority of Childers' Dictionary, may be taken to mean the Vedic hymns; and that therefore the land of the three Mons is India, the land of the three Vedas. This explanation would not be accepted by the Talaings. Whatever may have been the origin of the expression, it signifies to them the Talaing country, the old empire of Pegu.

In the book *Gavampati* the classical name *Rāmaññadesa* sometimes appears in the form *Raḥ mañña desa*, that is, the land of the *Mon Ña*. In a poetical version of the *Pathama Bodhi*, the story of Gotama Buddha, the author incidentally mentions the three Mons in his introduction. It is usual for an author thus to speak of the land of the Mons. The author in question gives the three *Mon* tribes in the usual

form *Man Duiñ*, *Man Da*, *Man Ña* and names their several provinces as Martaban, Bassein and Pegu. Of these the greatest and most powerful is the last named. He himself was of the Mañia. His parents, he says, were originally from Wagaru and Lamaing, but he wrote his book in the business part of Martaban town. The ordinary understanding is that the *Man Duiñ* and *Man Da* were a kind of wilder, unpolished Mons and the *Man Ña* were the more civilized ones. Colonel Gerini in his *Researches on Ptolemy's Geography of Eastern Asia*, in dealing with the Triglypton or Trilingon of the ancient author, has some remarks that seem to bear on this question of the three Mons. He derives Taleng or Talaing from Trikalanga or Trilinga, the three Kalingas; the term arising out of the fact of there being three districts or separate communities of these Kalinga people formed into one kingdom. If he is right in connecting the Talaing kingdom with these peoples, it may be that the Talaings have preserved the tradition of the three communities to the present day.

With regard to the name Talaing, a good deal has been said and written, but there is as yet no general agreement. Phayre, in his *History of Burma*, has no doubt that the first colonists were from Telingana, and that the name has been preserved by the Burmese and by foreigners in the form Talaing. Others derive the term from a Talaing word meaning *to tread*, and explain that it was given by the Burmese to designate the Talaings as a downtrodden people. Dr. Stevens derives it from the Mon *ita luim*, 'Father, [we] perish,' which he thinks would be often heard during the troublous times that followed Alaungphra's conquest of Pegu. Another explanation of the term, given by Talaings themselves, is, that in the days of the persecution, which need not be always regarded as being as late as Alaungphra, mothers used to say, *leñ ra, kon ai*, '[We] are undone, my child,' and that the Burmese, hearing the word *leñ* frequently repeated, nicknamed the people Talaing (*talen*). *Len*, 'to be undone,' is pronounced just as Talaings pronounce the second part of the name given them by the Burmese. There seems no trace of this name in the Talaing writings.

"Mon" is the term used throughout, even when others are the speakers.

NOTE.—It now appears from a note on the word "Talaing" in Volume II, Part II, of the *Burma Research Society's Journal*, at pages 246-7, that "Tanlaing," the ancient form of the word, is found in an inscription of the reign of Kyanzittha (1084—1112). From the manner in which it is there used, it is reasonably concluded that it was then well known and had presumably been in use amongst the Burmese for some time before, probably from the time of Anawratha. If we are to find an origin for it in a Talaing phrase, it seems most natural to connect it with the *leñ* of Talaing writers, used often of the destruction of Thatôn. "Tanlaing" may very well represent *tan leñ*, 'stands ruined.'

### HISTORY.

From Phayre's *History of Burma*, the reader, with diligence, could easily piece together the history of the Talaings as far as it is known. The salient features are very fully given there, though of course it is found mixed up with the events in the history of the other peoples who make up modern Burma. Phayre's volume is of great help to the student of native Talaing historical records. A great deal of help too is given by the archæologists, formerly by Dr. Forchhammer in his various researches; latterly by Mr. Taw Sein Ko and others who have studied the older records. Colonel Gerini (*Researches in Ptolemy's Geography of Eastern Asia*) gives valuable help in the matter of place names.

The native records are largely available in printed form now. The history of Pegu in the Mon language by the Monk of Aswo', mentioned in Phayre's preface, has long been available to European readers in Father Schmidt's volume giving the Mon text, a transliteration, a translation into German, and critical notes. Mr. Blagden's English translation of the German work with supplementary notes is expected soon to be available.

Two volumes of the native records have been printed at Paklat, near Bangkok. These volumes give, together with the facts of history, a certain amount of the traditions and folklore of the Talaings. Whilst these records are not always history in the strict sense of the term, they are

written with a knowledge of the history. Dates, for the most part, compare with one another and with what is known otherwise. There are many accretions, of course, and the authors must have often drawn on their imagination for embellishments.

The cities famous in Talaing history are represented by the modern names of Rangoon, Pegu, Moulmein, Martaban, Thatôn, Syriam, Prome, with Bassein, Tavoy and others to a lesser extent. The great capitals of kings who were prominent as overlords of the Talaing country, wholly or in part, are Thatôn, Martaban and Pegu. Of these the last named only lives in the memory of the bulk of present-day Talaings as the great city of their kings.

Talaing history opens with the founding of Thatôn. The earlier history is of course not so circumstantial as that of later times. The events in the history are not told with such precision as the later ones in the history of Pegu. The legend states that two young men, one of royal and the other of noble blood, came over from Central India and lived as hermits in the neighbourhood of the future Talaing kingdom. Under their separate roofs two boys of a dragon mother, their father having returned to Hemavanta forest, were brought up. One became the first king of Thatôn and the other dying young is said to have been reborn as Gavampati, a famous disciple of the Buddha. It is this Gavampati who is said to have visited the country with his master and gives the name to the book which relates the history of the founding and subsequent destruction of Thatôn. A list of fifty-seven kings is given, beginning with Siharaja and ending with Manuha who was carried off to Pagan when Anuruddha, or Anoratha, destroyed Thatôn in A.D. 1057. One of the records gives the names of the kings with the length of each reign, as well as incidents which happened in various reigns. The visit of the Buddhist missionaries, Uttara and Sona, who came and taught the people and spread the religion, is mentioned, though some doubt is now thrown on the historicity of the event; at least it is disputed that Thatôn was the country referred to under the name Suyarna Bhumi. At any rate it is stated that monks,



Brahmans, temples, and monasteries flourished in great plenty and the state became just like the Tavatiṃsa heaven. It is related that on the arrival of the missionaries, the rākshasas (Talaing *rakuih* or *kalok qāk*) came up out of the sea and proceeded to seize the children. Thereupon the rahans created figures endued with spiritual power who attacked the rākshasas and drove them away. They dared not then afterwards return to trouble the children.

We may take it, following Phayre, Forbes and others, that some six hundred years before Christ, settlers came over from Northern India and imposed their civilization on the wilder original inhabitants, who are referred to in the chronicles as rākshasas. The story of the dragon mother no doubt refers to the mixing of the more civilized incomers with the ruder inhabitants of the country. From this would result a people of mixed descent and of some civilization about the capital, amongst whom the preachers of Buddhism would gain a ready footing, whilst the ruder aboriginal inhabitants of the country around would remain more actively hostile.

Here, at any rate, when religion and civilization had had time to work, Anuruddha of Pagan found teachers whom he deemed fit to lead his own people to a purer faith and to guide them into the paths of Buddhistic and more ancient Indian lore. For we read that he carried away learned monks, literary men of spiritual insight, versed in the Tripitaka and the Vedas as well as men of science. And Thatôn, which had been a centre of civilization and learning for more than sixteen centuries, became a waste; and, in the words of the chronicles, "all who were noble and learned in Brahmanical lore, skilled in the two kinds of attainment (literature and spiritual insight), versed in the Tripitaka and the Vedas, were carried away by King Anuruddha and Arimaddanapura (Pagan), flourished and was in great plenty like Tavatiṃsa."

Pegu, usually in the older records called by its classical name Hamsāvati, was, according to the Talaing books, founded by two young princes from Thatôn in the year 1116 of the Buddhist era, that is, A.D. 573. According to the

legend, a female child was born of a dragon mother and afterwards brought up and cared for by the hermit Loma. She grew up a beautiful girl, and a hunter, wandering in the forest, chanced to see her and carried the report to Thatôn, where the king hearing it lost no time in asking for her hand and making her his queen. In due course she gave birth to twin sons. The mother dying and being proved of dragon race, the king was induced to send the boys away to their foster grandfather. There they grew up and afterwards went to serve in the palace unknown to their father. Thence by reason of an entanglement with a young princess they were compelled to flee. They returned again to the hermit Loma, but he, fearing for their safety, persuaded them to go westward and found a city where the land had gradually emerged from the sea. They set out on seventeen rafts with one hundred and seventy followers, and settled down to found a city but were opposed by Indian settlers who claimed the right of a prior possession of the ground. They were in despair and looking for a way out of the difficulty when Smiñ In (Indra) appeared on the scene in the guise of a Brahman. By a stratagem he proved that the brothers had a better claim having a deeper mark with an earlier date. They thereupon commenced to build the city, Indra measuring the ground with a chain of pearls. It is often in the books spoken of as *Hamsāvatī smit smiñ In*, 'Pegu, the creation of Indra.'

We may conclude that these young princes, being compelled to leave the palace at Thatôn and seeking a new sphere, were guided to the new lands. They were, however, opposed by Indian settlers, who at the time were obliged to retire; a later struggle with Indians is also recorded. The elder brother, Samala, after reigning twelve years, was succeeded by his brother Wimala. It was in the latter reign that the Indians again appeared and in turn might have driven out the Talaings, but that the son of Samala, who had been sent away as a child by his uncle and had been reared by a keeper of buffaloes, appeared on the scene at the right moment as the champion of his people. In a single combat he defeated the Indian giant who for

weeks had been throwing taunts at the Talaings and defying them to produce a man to decide the contest with him. This young man, named Asaḥ Kummā or Smiṇ Asaḥ, succeeded his uncle as the third king of Pegu.

This dynasty, consisting of seventeen kings, reigned in Pegu some one hundred and fifty years. The last of the line is named Tissarājā. This is Phayre's King Titha or Tissa. The native chronicles have a long story about this king's falling away from the national religion and subsequent reinstatement by the agency of a young damsel whom he afterwards made his queen. Heretical teachers had come in and taught that the statues which had been looked upon as objects of reverence were but statues of men and were of no account. By the king's order they were therefore thrown on the rubbish heap.

The story of this maiden is found in slightly different forms, but it is to this effect. She was the daughter of a wealthy citizen and although young in years was devoted to the religion of the Buddha. Going out with her maids to bathe on one occasion she saw these desecrated images. She at once ordered them to be taken up and cleansed. Her maids remonstrated with her, saying that she would incur the displeasure of the king. She would not listen to anything of this but proceeded with her cleansing. Some of the heretical teachers seeing her thus occupied went and informed the king. In due course she was summoned before the king and asked why she was bathing and cleansing the images which he had caused to be thrown out in the rubbish heap. "They are but pieces of wood," he said, "which men of former times had fashioned in the likeness of men." To this she replied that they were not merely images of men but were the representatives of the great Lord of the three worlds, who through countless kalpas had attained the thirty paramitas and sought the advantage of the many. "Whosoever," she added, "debases these will be subject to the four apayas. Because I wish to serve to the advantage of this world and the next, I have taken and bathed the images of the Lord." The king thereupon asked for a sign, saying he would believe only on seeing a miracle performed. The

girl at once placed candles, parched rice and incense before the images and prayed that the Lord would signify his approval of these, his representatives, by giving a sign to satisfy the doubts of the king. On this the images rose up in the air to the height of a palmyra palm and, floating away with ease, alighted to the west of the city. The people seeing the wonder waved their cloths and made offerings to the images. When the king saw the miracle he was greatly pleased and, making the maiden his chief queen, he called for the heretics to be brought to him. He commanded that they should be buried standing in the ground up to their necks. Some, fearing this death, fled and found for themselves a more speedy end up the Saloñ creek. King Tissa, from formerly being a doer of evil deeds, by consorting with the piously inclined, developed a religious disposition and after much meritorious endeavour to restore the religion of the Lord at length reached the state of impermanence.

This maiden under the name of Bhadrādevī or Subhaddādevī, 'the pious queen,' is a type of piety and devotion to the religion, often referred to by the monkish authors when they become homiletical.

Here there is obviously a reference to a time when what may be called the national religion had been set aside and replaced by something else. The heretics mentioned in the story are probably Brahmanical teachers who thus made their influence felt in high places.

One of the native chronicles (Gavampati), in giving a short summary of the history of Pegu, gives one hundred and fifty years as the length of the period in which this first dynasty of kings reigned in Pegu. The city then became a waste and, in the Talaing phrase, became part of the realm of Pagan and Ava. This, however, is evidently a phrase of later times after Ava had become the capital of Burma, and means that the country was under foreign government. The period of foreign domination, according to the same authority, lasted for five hundred and sixty-three years. During all this time nothing is recorded in connection with Pegu. In the shorter account of Thatōn, printed in the first Paklat volume, there is reference to an invasion possibly of

Khmer when the help of the king of Pagan was solicited to repel the invaders, but there is no mention of Pegu. It is not even mentioned in connection with Anuruddha's invasion when Thatôn was destroyed and its king carried captive. The Kalyāṇī inscriptions speak of the country being broken up into a number of principalities, but little can be learned with certainty as to the position of things with the Talaing people.

At the end of this period of foreign domination, a governor of Pegu, placed there by the king of Pagan, comes on the scene. He would seem to have formed a strong connection with the Talaings and, rebelling against his master, made himself king. He and his two immediate successors are counted by the Talaing writers as the second dynasty which reigned in Pegu. They do not appear in Phayre's lists of the kings. Their names are Akhamaman, Lakkhyā and Tarāphyā. The latter, hearing the report of Warero of Martaban, sent to him asking help against the armies of Pagan. The king of Martaban went over and by his prompt help the invaders were driven away up the Irrawaddy again. A quarrel, however, ensued between the allies and, in a single combat between the two kings, Tarāphyā was slain. Pegu then passed over to the domination of Martaban. The city was thus reduced from its kingly state and became a provincial town for a space of sixty years. The kings who reigned in Martaban during that time are not counted as kings of Pegu.

Martaban thus for a time became the capital of Lower Burma, the Rāmaññadesa of the books. In A.D. 1287 it had a Burmese governor, Alimamañ, whom Warero, the first king of Martaban, entrapped and slew. This Warero, originally a merchant named Magadū, who was in the habit of visiting the Siamese capital of Sukhothai for purposes of trade, had by a combination of circumstances settled in Sukhothai and attained to a high position in the palace. He formed an intimacy with a daughter of the king, unknown to her father, and the young couple, seeing no other course open, eloped and fled the country in her father's absence. Settling down in his native town Warero commenced

intriguing against the Burmese governor Alima. Enticing him out on a pretext of giving his sister in marriage, Magadū and his people set upon and slew the governor when he and his retinue were unaware. He at once took up the reins of government and, to consolidate his position, applied to his father-in-law for recognition. The old king, the famous Pra Ruang of Siamese story, on hearing the message was greatly delighted that his son-in-law had attained to the dignity of king. "He is not of royal race," he said, "but is as a ruler dropped down from the sky." He therefore sent him the five insignia of royalty and gave him the name Hwārow (Fāro) which the Talaing author explains as meaning "dropped down from the sky." The kings of Sukhothai thus became nominal overlords of Martaban and their suzerainty was recognized for several reigns to the extent of sending up an ambassador to seek approval as each king ascended the throne. In the third year of his reign Warero took counsel with the wise men, the monks, and Brahmans of his realm and the generals and captains of his armies, and had a Dhammasat or law book compiled. It was known at first as Magadu's Dhammasat, but later came to be called Waro's or Warero's Dhammasat. This is the Wagaru Dhammathat of the Burmese.

It was not till the reign of Bañā U, the fifth king after Warero, in the year 1369, that Pegu was restored to its former glory, a rājādhanī, a royal city. From this reign on until the end of the sixteenth century Pegu was the great city of Lower Burma and the centre of its government. The Talaing books tell of its glories, its palaces, its towers and battlements, its moats, its lakes, its parks, its streets and religious buildings.

The next king, Rājādhirat, gives the title to one of the historical books and is quite famous in Talaing history. The story of this king is a long record of almost incessant war. He was compelled to make war first with his own dependents and then with the king of Burma, the two kings being unable to settle down as neighbours until they had made trial in military strength and tactics. He led his armies into Bassein and Arakan and even to the Burmese

capital, from which latter place he was persuaded to retreat without striking a blow by the intercession of a Buddhist monk.

The succeeding kings of Pegu for several reigns were all immediate descendants and relatives of this king until, last of all, the government was in the hands of his daughter. In Talaing history she is known as Bañā Thau, but to the Burmese she is known as Shin Sawbu. *Ekarāt braw ron*, '[she was] indeed a woman monarch.' She is the only example in Talaing history of a woman reigning in her own right. Interest attaches to her name, too, owing to the fact that she called the monk Pitakadhara to be her uparājā or heir-apparent. He is known in Burmese history as Dhammaceti who, in the fifteenth century, sought to restore the religion to its pristine purity and who left epigraphical records of his efforts at reform. The Kalyānī inscriptions at Pegu are important in deciding questions on the history of the country. He also set up some records at the Shwe Dagôn Pagoda at Rangoon. This monarch ruled wisely and firmly. Many stories are told in the native records of his wise decisions.

The son and successor of Dhammaceti, Bañā Rām, enjoyed a long and peaceful reign, evidenced by the fact that the only expedition mentioned in the native chronicles is a pilgrimage to the Shwezigôn Pagoda at Pagan. The king and queen set out up the Irrawaddy with a great flotilla consisting of a magnificent raft and all kinds of boats. Arriving at Promé the matter of a hostile demonstration in the upper country seems to have been discussed, but in the end peaceful councils prevailed. The journey was proceeded with, and, after worshipping at the shrine, a return was made to Pegu.

The son of Bañā Rām known to history by the name of Dakā-rat-pi, who succeeded his father in A.D. 1526, was of a different nature. He ascended the throne as a youth of sixteen, but, spending his time in sports and amusements he took no interest in the studies and pursuit that would have fitted him for his position. In the words of the chronicler "he was like a mute never looking at books." It was now that Tabeng Shwethi, the king of Taungu, appeared on the

scene. After two failures he at length succeeded in taking Pegu on a third attempt. Though of Burmese race he is recognized in the native books as being of the true succession. He is said to have cut his hair and become a Mon in the year A.D. 1544, the fourth of his reign in Pegu. At this time Shan chiefs were reigning in Ava. Martaban had been subdued after the fall of Pegu and the rulers of Taungu and Prome were tributary to Tabeng Shwethī. The reigning Sawbwa laid siege to Prome, but his army was dispersed by the forces of Tabeng Shwethī with great slaughter and pursued to Ava. The old capital of Pagan was occupied. He next invaded Arakan in great state, but after some successes found the capital too strongly fortified and had to return to Pegu.

His attention was now turned to Siam and then began the long devastating wars which eventually brought about the fall of the old Siamese capital of Ayuthia to the Burmese armies of Sinbyushin. Tabeng Shwethī assembled a great army of Shans, Burmese and Talaings, numbering over one hundred thousand men with elephants and horses, and marched by way of Martaban. The governor of Martaban is said to have built a bridge-of-boats from Martaban to Moulmein over which a horse could be ridden at the gallop. The Siamese came forth and opposed their march on the capital, but were forced to flee and a son of the king was taken. The difficulties of getting food and water for his great army proved too much and Tabeng Shwethī determined to return to Pegu. He was followed by the Siamese and in a pitched battle one of their leaders was taken and negotiations followed. He was then allowed to retire without further molestation.

It was soon after this that Smin Dhaw (Phayre's Thamintoa), a natural son of Bañā Rām, raised a rebellion amongst the Talaings and in the troubles that followed Tabeng Shwethī was murdered by Smin Dot, a Talaing noble who had been made governor of Sittaung and was at the time in close touch with the king.

Smin Dot became king of Pegu, but after a little over three months had to give way to the superior claims of Smin



Dhaw, also called Juklālī. This is the last king of Talaing race in Pegu and he reigned only one year.

Bureng Naung, the foster brother and general of Tabeng Shwethī, who was rightful heir to the throne, had been forced to retire to Taungu consequent on the Talaing risings in Pegu. Claiming his right to the throne of his native city, he soon was powerful enough to advance on Pegu. Smiñ Dhaw was driven out and Bureng Naung became king of Pegu in A.D. 1551. His ambition, like that of his foster brother, was to be master of the neighbouring kingdoms of Burma and Siam as well as Pegu. To this end he made war with the Shan chiefs, who at that time lorded over the upper country and carried his arms into Chiengmai which he entirely subjugated. In a second expedition into Lower Siam the king of Ayuthia was taken and carried to Pegu, and Siam for some years was counted a vassalage of Pegu. Wiang Chan, the capital of Eastern Laos, was also taken. Before this, Bureng Naung had rebuilt Pegu and European travellers of the time speak of its glories. The glowing descriptions of the city which one finds in the native books are no doubt reminiscent of this new city of Bureng Naung.

On the death of Bureng Naung in A.D. 1581, his son Nanda Bureng came to the throne. He had much trouble with his various tributary kings in Burma. Latterly the Siamese asserted independence under Phra Naret, who subsequently became king of Siam. After repeated invasions an expedition was sent to Ayuthia under the upparājā or heir-apparent, but in the severe fighting which followed the Peguan army was badly defeated and their leader slain. The Siamese now retaliated by invading Burma and marching up to the walls of Pegu. The Siamese king was forced to retire, but he now began to take an interest in the eastern districts and even appointed a governor in Moulmein. It was now too that the Talaings began to look to Siam as a haven of refuge. A great company of monks and laymen followed Phra Naret into Siam, where they were given lands and where their descendants remain to this day. Nanda Bureng was in the end carried off to Taungu, where he met his death.

The great empire of Pegu was now broken up into a number of principalities. De Brito, the Portuguese, was governor of Syriam and is mentioned in the Talaing chronicles as holding the destinies of the Talaings and their great shrines. But in the words of the chronicler, "Because he was not of the true faith he could not participate in the enshrinement of the relics." He was besieged in Syriam by Maha Dhamma Raja, the grandson of Bureng Naung and now king of Ava. The town was sacked and De Brito put to a shameful death. Maha Dhamma Raja became king of Pegu and took up his quarters in a camp to the west of the city. His son Mengrè Dippa, who succeeded, again established himself in the city. He reigned only one year at Pegu and, according to Phayre, was never recognized in Ava. On the death of Mengrè Dippa, his uncle Thado Dhamma Raja was consecrated king in Pegu, but subsequently removed his capital to Ava. In 1660, in the reign of Bengtalè, the Sitkè of Martaban received orders from Ava to disarm the Talaings. Some two years later we find this officer making plans in conjunction with the Burmese and Shans to seize the Talaings. A cage and fetters were prepared and orders given to seize the principal men. The Talaings getting noise of it gathered together to the number of 904, entered Martaban in the night and burned up the town, so that in the morning not a building was standing. The conspirators fled to Pegu.

Martaban was often the rallying point of the Talaings from now on. They seem to have had more and more a leaning toward the protection of Siam. It was from Martaban that the fugitive expeditions into that country often started, though they did not always get away without opposition from the Burmese authorities. They were sometimes pursued and many of them brought back. There were three routes traversed, the northern one *viâ* Myawaddy and Raheng; the southern one *viâ* Tavoy and Kanburi; and a middle one by way of the three pagodas. They were met by the Siamese authorities at Raheng, Utaitani, and Kanburi and conducted to suitable quarters, chiefly on the Menam. There is a village and monastery on that river called in

Talaing the granary where grain is said to have been stored for their use.

There was again a raising of the hopes of the Talaings when, in 1740, the Gwe Shan with the name of Buddha Kesi became king of Pegu. He seems to have reigned with satisfaction to the Talaings; but, after six years only, he wandered away without any apparent reason. His general and compatriot succeeded with the Talaing name Bañā Dala. For a time it looked as if the fortunes of Pegu had been restored with greater prospects than ever before. Just at the time when the Talaings had apparently gained the complete ascendancy over the Burmese, one village resisted, and, in time, its hunter chief not only became master of Ava, but pushed on his conquests until Pegu itself was taken, its king carried off, and the Talaing people utterly subjugated. Since that time the Talaings have been a people without a country.

In all times of depression the hopes of the people have centred in a "Smīn Mon," a Talaing king and one of whatever race, so long as he set himself to guard their interests, was accepted as filling the rôle. There is still a hope indulged, especially in rural districts, both in Burma and in Siam, of a Mon ruler, and one is often asked what one thinks of the prospects. Better counsels, however, prevail amongst the more enlightened, and the Talaings are encouraged to take a pride in those things which point them out as a distinct race.

#### NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

It will be seen that the Talaings, as a separate people with laws and government of their own, no longer exist. In Burma it is no longer possible for the casual observer to distinguish them from the Burmese. It is only in the matter of language that they greatly differ to any but the closest observer. In Siam it is somewhat different, where, in their own villages and at the great religious festivals, with their women folk about them, they can always be distinguished as

a people apart ; but there again they are an exiled people, a people without a country. Close observers in Burma have had to own the almost impossibility of distinguishing the Talaings in mere appearance apart from the Burmese. Dr. Haswell, who had mastered their language and was intimately acquainted with the people, had to confess his inability, after a residence of more than thirty-eight years in the country, to tell a Talaing by his looks. Sir George Scott, writing more recently, also indicates the difficulty of making the distinction. They are not, however, without a sense of separate nationality and pride of race. This is not wonderful when one thinks of what the race has achieved in the past. The fame of Pegu or Hamsāvati still lives in their memory ; and to the Talaings of Siam, Burma, or at least Lower Burma, is still the Mon Country. These latter always speak with affection of the land of their forefathers.

With all this difficulty of making the distinction it is still possible to arrive at some approximate estimate of the racial characteristics. It is in Siam that observers seem to recognize best a distinct type. Warrington Smythe, in *Five Years in Siam*, characterizes them as "a strong handsome race, very like the Siamese"; and as "a fine agricultural people, the remains of the old Peguan empire, cultivating their paddy, Indian corn and fruit gardens, along the banks of the rivers, and preserving their language and customs in the monasteries." W. A. Graham, in his recent book on Siam, describing the Mons, says: "The communities . . . have increased in size and prosperity, many individuals have risen to high office in the service of the state and the Mons today are reckoned among the more prosperous people of Siam. One of the most popular and successful Siamese ministers, at the court of St. James's, within recent years, was a scion of this race." And again, "as a Talaing in Burma, so a Mon in Siam, can often be distinguished by his superior size and height ; otherwise his physical appearance is almost identical with the Siamese." To one living and moving about amongst them, these references to the physical characteristics of the Talaings are perfectly fair. There are, of course, little men amongst them too ; still, in comparison

with their surroundings, they are a fine, sturdy-looking race. One is often forced to exclaim, "What a fine-looking man!" It is perhaps especially true of their women that they are strong and handsome and that, too, often at an age when the women of the East are said to deteriorate in personal charm. A fine type of elderly matrons may often be seen walking about the monastery grounds on worship days. An old Spanish account of Siam quoted in Bowring's *Siam* gives remarkable testimony here: "Their [Siamese] features and figures are not ill-looking; but the women of Pegu are more beautiful and fairer."

In their own village communities they are simple, trustful people. Their confidence is often abused, but they are quite ready to trust again. When they go into the towns and mix with other races they are apt to lose this simplicity of character. One wishes that their own race characteristics could be preserved.

The rulers of Siam early recognized their value as citizens, and from the first seem to have treated the refugees from Burma very well. They were put in positions of trust too. Captain Burney, the British Envoy to Siam at the time of the first Anglo-Burmese war, found many Mons among the high officers of the state. The British Government had thoughts of re-establishing the old kingdom of Pegu and he reports very favourably of the people. "The best troops and artisans," he says, "and in fact the most useful subjects belonging to Siam, are either emigrants from Pegu or descendants of those who formerly fled from Burmese usurpation." Again he says, "Many of them are employed by the court in situations of great trust and confidence." This appreciation of the Talaings in Siam has continued to the present day.

#### DRESS.

The dress worn by the Talaings in Burma is the ordinary Burmese dress. In that respect they are quite indistinguishable from the Burmese. The men wear a loin cloth, *glik*,





MONKS AND PUNS

consisting of a piece of narrow cloth, some eight yards long, sewn in two breadths without cutting. It is put round the body and fastened in with a twist at the waist, and the remaining part of it is gathered up in three folds and hung from the waist in front or simply thrown over the shoulder. Old men may be seen on cold mornings with the spare end worn round the shoulders as a shawl. The silk material for this garment is sometimes cut and made into two *saluings*. To make an ordinary *saluing*, a piece of cloth, some twenty-two inches wide and four and a half yards long, is woven. It is cut in two and the two breadths joined. The ends are then sewn together and the garment is complete. Cotton is used for workaday wear and silk for special occasions. The upper part of the body is covered with a short white cotton jacket or one of darker material. The head is covered with a bright coloured silk handkerchief put round and the ends tucked in as a turban.

The *ganin* worn by the women is formed just like the men's *saluing*, except that it has a broad band of a different pattern on the top and is somewhat smaller than the men's garment. A jacket of white or coloured cotton or silk completes the costume. On festive occasions a bright silk scarf is worn over the shoulders. Very old women may sometimes be seen with an open *ganin* consisting of a piece of silk, almost square, made of two widths joined together. It is sometimes partly laced to keep it from opening too much in walking. Sandals or slippers are worn by both men and women.

In Siam the Talaing men are hardly to be distinguished from the Siamese men. There they wear the *panung* or Siamese loin cloth, but they give to it the same name *glik* as they give to the Burmese *putso*. Jackets after the Burmese pattern are often worn, but those who mean to dress well wear a coat of European pattern after the manner of the Siamese. Hats are also much worn. The *gaungbaung* or turban is not seen in Siam. The hair is cut short by the men in the Siamese way. What the original Talaing style of wearing the hair was may be difficult now to determine. It is interesting to note that the Talaing historian tells us that



Tabeng Shwethi, four years after his accession to the throne of Pegu, cut his hair in the Mon fashion. I am told that this was not a cropping of the hair in the European or Siamese way, but a cutting of the ends as if a bowl were upturned on the head and the ends evenly trimmed all round the rim.

The Mon women of Siam usually wear the hair long and twisted into chignon at the back of the head. It is quite different from the Burmese style. The Burmese women coil it in a different way and have it more on the top of the head. They also wear the *ganin*, though it differs somewhat from the Burmese *tameing*. As the women in Siam bear burdens on the shoulder instead of on the head as in Burma, the carriage is different. A tight-fitting jacket is also worn, white for festive occasions and dark for working wear.

#### TATTOOING.

The Talaings in Siam do not tattoo, whilst the practice is universal in Talaing villages in Burma. It is quite evidently of Burmese origin and was in the days of the old voyagers one of the marks which distinguished the Burmese from the Talaings. In Siam the little tattooing which is sometimes seen is done by wandering tattooers from Burma and is only very partial. In Talaing villages in Burma there is always a professional tattooer. It will thus appear that the Talaing as he is seen in Burma is entirely Burmese in his dress and appearance. Hence the difficulty of distinguishing him from the Burmese.

#### WEAPONS.

The weapons mentioned in Talaing books are the sword and spear, but they are not now in use except in the kalok dances and various rites performed. Talaings may sometimes be seen going from home bearing a dah or cleaver of longer blade which is called *sjañ*, 'sword,' but it is intended for use as an implement for cutting rather than as a weapon, although it is also regarded as a comfort to one who does not

know what evil-disposed person he is likely to meet. The swords of former days were presumably of similar pattern, but having a point which is not now allowed to private persons. The doñs or spirit mediums keep a stock of weapons, swords, spears, and shields for use in the dances. Bows were apparently, as they are still, implements of the chase rather than weapons of warfare.

## SECTION II.—DOMESTIC LIFE.

### HOUSES.

THE ordinary village house may be of wood with a thatched roof, or it may be mostly of bamboo and thatch with good, stout, wood posts. At times, however, a house has to be put up with whatever posts and timbers are available. On such occasions saplings are cut from the woods and used. Such houses have to be renewed in a few years. In Burma the houses of Talaings are pretty much like the houses of the Burmese; and similarly in Siam the Siamese type is pretty much used. To speak more particularly of those of the Burmese type, the roof comes down on two sides, front and back, from a ridge running the full length of the house, the front part usually coming out further and lower than the back part. It is not considered right to depart much from this type.

The front wall is composed mostly of doorway and usually is quite open during the day, when the family is at home. Houses built mostly of bamboo and thatch have often one large doorway at one side, toward the passage to the back part of the house. Outside on the front there is always a little verandah. Inside the four walls the house might be said to be one big room. Usually, however, there is an upper room in one back corner. This is called the inner house and is understood to be reserved for the use of the family. Relatives on a visit are sometimes admitted. The front part of the house is considered the guest room and there visitors, staying the night, are allowed to sleep. The space running through from front to back is used as a kitchen at the back part, and the space under the inner or upper room is used for storage purposes.

The houses of the Talaings in Siam seem, as I have said, to be somewhat after a Siamese pattern, though, curiously enough, the different parts seem to correspond better with the names of the parts of a house as found in the books. There is the main house called *bo' shi*, with a very steep roof and having walls on all four sides. Outside of that there is another part called *dayū* with often no front wall and a very flat roof. Again there is the *tameñ* with no walls and no roof. The *phau* or kitchen is outside by the *tameñ* and entered from it. The whole is built on posts as in Burma.

Houses built in the fields and gardens for temporary use are not reckoned as houses but *tāai*, 'huts,' and do not come under the rules for houses. There is a curious rule in the Lokasamutti for transforming a hut into a house so as to be able to carry out the ordinary house regulations in the case of death under unfortunate circumstances. If the dwelling has no central supports for the ridge pole it is a hut, but to raise it to the status of a house the wall plates and cross beams must be carved.

In building a house a great many matters have to be considered. The wisdom of the ancients, as crystallized in oral tradition and in the books, may not be lightly set aside. A Talaing feels bound to abide by the instructions given and to seek to avoid evil consequences foreshadowed in the tradition. To take first the choosing of the site, it will be for good or ill according to the direction from the road. If the ground lies low to the north, north-east, or east, it will be well; if to the south or west there will be sickness and death; if to the north-west or south-east there will be misery; and if to the south-west there will be danger from thieves. Again, if the ground is flat like the end of a drum, there will be much wealth; if rounded like the back of a turtle, the original goods will be lost; if like the full moon you will have the privilege of offering to rulers. If the ground is a long ridge in the shape of a bow, it is said to be an elephant or horse site and there will be danger from fire. The intending builder is directed to plough the site like a field and drain off the water.

The best months for building are May, August, November, January and March. A person building in any of these five months will be sure to prosper. It is an offence to build during the remaining seven months. The penalty for building in April is much misery, that for building in June death ; to build during July would entail much poverty and sickness ; and so on.

The different days of the week affect things variously too. If you build on Sunday, you will have happiness for your reward. Building on Monday brings prosperity in the end. Tuesday means burning. Building on Wednesday brings first misery and then happiness. Thursday is similar. Friday much the same. Saturday building means calamity.

The great day in the building of a house is the first day when the posts are raised. All the neighbours and friends gather in and lend a hand. The women labour at the cooking pots to make food for the workers. Before beginning work, a little ceremony takes place on the top of the posts which are lying gathered in one place. There is a suitable offering of fruits and flowers. A mantra or charm is repeated and water is poured on the ground. Sometimes monks are present, but often the ceremony is conducted by an ordinary person versed in the procedure.

The ceremonial in connection with the raising of the posts is thus given in one of the versions of the Lokasiddhi :—

“When you are raising the posts, boil rice and offer thus : ‘Attha dissā devatā he agacchantu paribhuñjatu mahā bhojanam mama dhanam labam sukha mevana te idha ehi kñā kñā.’ Having invited and feasted the devas of the eight directions, set up the posts. Before erecting the posts bathe them in charmed water repeating this charm : ‘Na sitam te sadhanam pujayi. Sabba labho bhavissati. Brahmana purasi sripuraranāra nassassirā buddhassa nirājetu rakhhantu grodhā mama parassatam hadeyā hareyā sukyassati kote vāri kolaṇ te sataṅkaliyā nā tali balituna chamma niva krit ’t satam kriyaḥ samano kava sava roso rota rohati. Jeyatu jeyatu bānati.’ With this mantra charm the water and bathe the posts. Repeat the charm as many times as you please, seven times or thirty-seven times. When about to put in the posts,

taking the king post, which is that on the south-east, arrange upon it a man's garments and hang up *snik* leaves with plantains and sugarcane and a coral ring. Make an offering at the base. The queen post, which is the middle one on the south side, is to be adorned with a woman's garments and a woman's ornaments and hung with *taluy* leaves. The minister post on the north-east is to be adorned with the turban, coat and dress of an elder and hung with betel-leaf. Thus will there be prosperity. The concubine post on the south-west is to be adorned with a woman's cloth and hung with eugenia leaves. The family post on the north-west is also to be adorned with a woman's garments. Offer uncooked rice at the base. Hang betel-leaf on the post as an offering. The hunter's post on the north is to be adorned with an elder's garments. Lay the bow and arrows at the base. So will you be free from offence. Let the wise man make the distinctions.

"When you put the posts thus adorned in their holes, repeat this gathā thrice times by way of giving thanks: 'Um devatideva brahma sabba lankāra bhūsitam te sudhanam papujjati sabba kammaya siddhi te tā.' Having repeated this erect the posts. First put up the queen post, then the king post, next the minister post, then the family post and after that the hunter's post. This is the order in which they are to be put in. Doing this you will overcome in every direction, and attain to presents, riches and long life. Let the wise follow the guidance."

The above is given as a written example of the procedure though it is by no means always followed, and here, as elsewhere, there are no doubt various versions of the ceremonial. One thing is certain, there is almost always some kind of ritual observed and one rarely sees a post-raising without observing some or other of these formalities.

In digging the holes for the posts, the work must be begun at a certain place and the posts must be brought into position and raised from a certain direction varying with the season. To find the direction, the builder must consider the position in which the dragon is lying at that time of year. In the months of March, April and May, the head of the dragon

is toward the west, the tail to the east, the belly to the north, and the back south ; and the posts must be brought into position from the south-east. During the months of June, July and August the dragon lies head north, tail south, belly east, and back west ; and then the posts must be brought in from the north-east. September, October and November the positions are head east, tail west, belly south, back north, and the posts must be brought in from the north-west. For December, January and February the positions are head south, tail north, belly west, back east, and the posts must be brought in from the south-west. This means that the posts, which are lying near in any convenient place, must be carried round and brought into position from the required direction.

When ready to dig the holes and put in the posts a man born on Sunday takes a digger and goes to the head of the dragon, a man born on Wednesday goes to the tail, and a man born on Thursday is ready to dig at the belly ; that is, each man takes a position north, south, east or west, as the case may be, but the man having the direction indicated by the belly must begin first. When he has made two or three digs with his tool, the others may begin. The earth taken out of the hole must be thrown toward the tail. Riches, honour and blessing will follow if the instructions are carried out. The posts may not be taken up and just thrown into the holes ; they must be let down gently. Otherwise it will be ill for the owner and his children.

It is evident that the positions of the dragon as indicated above have some reference to the course of the sun during the year. In the book of *One Thousand Omens* it is explained that some teachers say that the dragon reclines on the central mountain, Mount Meru ; that is, he lies with his back to it. The majority of teachers, however, cannot accept this explanation. The nature of animals is to lie hugging on their left side. So the great bulk of teachers hold that the dragon lies on his left side hugging Mount Meru, and therefore with his back away from it. So that when he is lying with his head west, he is taking shelter on the south side of Meru. When he changes round to the next position his head is north

and his body lies along the west side of the mountain, and so on.

To get the slope of the roof, the cross beam tying two posts is to be divided into eight parts and five of these taken as the length of the support for the ridge pole or beam. That is to say, the ridge pole is to be raised above the wall plate five-eighths of the measurement across from wall to wall.

The Lokasiddhi gives for the size of the door for the main room, *bo' shi*, three feet and one palm; and for that of the outer room, *dayū*, three feet and one hand. The same passage indicates that the front of the house would be toward the north, thus making the ridge pole run east and west. Mr. W. A. Graham, in his recent book on Siam, makes the statement that the Mons are always careful to have the ridge running east and west, a matter in which the Siamese are perfectly indifferent. It would seem that Talaing houses ought to be so built, but the rule is by no means generally carried out either in Siam or Burma. Sitting in a house in a Mon village in Siam one day, I called the attention of the owner to the fact that his roof was set the other way; that is, north and south, and asked why it was so. He explained that, although brought up and living amongst Mons, his father was a Siamese and that, consequently, he had no house spirit whose liking in the matter required any particular attention. The inference therefore was that the Mons were bound, out of deference to the house spirit, to build the house according to its requirements.

On entering a house to take up residence therein, the customs of old must be observed. If entry is made on Sunday, valuables must be taken first. If Monday be the day of entrance, then the mats and pillows must be first taken in. Should it be Tuesday, gold and silver must have preference. If residence be taken up on Wednesday, a meal must be first eaten before entering. On Thursday perfumes and lighted tapers must be taken in first. If an entry is made on Friday, the parents must first enter. Saturday must never be thought of as a day for entering a new house. It would only bring separation from those you love and trust.



Dissension and quarrelling would be sure to ensue. These are the rules of the Lokasiddhi and any one who observes them will increase in possessions.

In Talaing villages in Siam there is quite a little ceremony observed on such occasions; though, beyond giving heed to the different days, it does not seem to be common in Burma to have any particular ceremony. There are, however, in the books, various versions of the way in which the entry into a new house is to be made. Here is an example :—

“ On the day you enter a new house arrange as follows: Light nine candles and place them on the posts. Invite your relatives and friends to come suitably attired. Get seven persons, old people, youths and maidens, to come. Let the first person carry the pot of consecrated herbs for presentation. Let the pot be placed on the north-east. Let another place the basket of paddy on the east side. Place the person carrying the cotton bow on the south-east. Let the one carrying the grinding-stone stand on the south. Let the person bearing the cotton place it on the south-west. Let the maidens stand on the west. On the north-west let them set down the basket of cooked rice. Set the conch shell, decked pure white, on the north side. Let the owner of the house sit in the centre with all the gold and silver he possesses. Then let some one say, ‘ This day we enter this house for comfort and long life and that the owner may attain to possessions with length of years and prosperity and that relatives and followers may abound.’ Thus have they said from the beginning of the world. This was the practice of our forefathers.”

Another example is as follows: “ Rule for entering a house as of old. In the front, let the owner take up a central position bearing sword and spear. Following after, let an elderly person carry a cat. After that, let a maiden come bearing a water pot. Next let the followers come bearing mats and pillows. Then the parents, uncles and aunts. Let there be candles burning with glowing splendour. Under the house let men watch bearing sword and spear. When about to enter, let a maiden, well favoured, come

forward and pull the owner by the wrist and so let him step inside. In this way there will be no offence and there will be freedom from blame in every quarter. Take a pot of water and let any one of mature years make a prayer, and pour out the water in the middle of the house."

In still another example not only the sanction of religion is sought, but there is an evident intention to prevent the entrance of untoward influences. The stair is to be tied in three places with bamboo strips steeped in perfumed water. Seven thorny branches are to be placed outside the door and also a new pot containing perfumed water. The Buddha, the doctrine and the order are to be worshipped toward the east; the teachers toward the south; and the guardian angels toward the west. Various articles of domestic use are to be placed in the eight directions, such as the cotton bow, the cotton winder, the grinding-stone, consisting of table and roller, the cotton gin, the crate of paddy, the crate of cotton, and the pot containing the jewels.

The stair to a Talaing house, which might be more properly called a ladder, being quite moveable, ought, according to the Lokasiddhi, to be made with five steps. This rule is so rigidly observed that one will sometimes see a stair whose fourth step is flush with the verandah and the fifth away above. Sometimes a departure is made and seven steps will be seen, the odd number being required. The sides of the stair or ladder ought to be and usually are made so that one is longer than the other.

#### HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE AND UTENSILS.

The furnishing of a Talaing house is a very simple matter. A few mats and pillows, with a home woven cotton blanket or two, often forms the only bedding. Sometimes there is a mattress or two, but a reed mat is considered quite sufficient for ordinary folk. The absence of chairs, table, etc., is particularly striking to the stranger. When a visitor calls, it is usual to place a mat for a seat. A roll of spare mats and a bundle of pillows are often kept, by those

able to have more than is absolutely necessary, for the use of visitors. If a visitor is likely to stay a while and special honour is intended, several of these fresh clean mats will be spread out and a pillow or two placed so that the visitor may recline at ease. The betel-box is a necessary adjunct and is always set out when a visitor calls. In Talaing villages in Siam, a metal tray with a kind of stand is used to contain the chewing materials. A good sized spittoon is also set forth. A small teak-box or metal trunk with lock is sometimes seen in the inner room, in which are kept the finer garments and valuables.

The kitchen is provided with clay cooking pots and some water jars, a cooking spoon or two, and a supply of bowls and plates for the necessities of the family. There is little of this kind that is kept for mere show.

There is also often the *ga'up* or vessel for carrying food to the monks at the monastery, and a number of little bowls, with covers, for curries and side dishes; together with a good sized basin for boiled rice. In Talaing villages in Siam, the bowls are arranged on a wooden tray called *thaba* or a brass one called *thal*.

Other adjuncts of the house are the mill, for husking the paddy; the pestle and mortar, for pounding it to remove the inner pellicle; the baskets, for containing the paddy and milled rice; the stiff mat of split bamboo, for putting the paddy out in the sun before it is milled; and the winnowing baskets. In the *British Burma Gazetteer*, Volume I, page 404, the Burmese mill is thus described:—

“The mill consists of a solid cylinder of wood about two feet in diameter, the upper surface roughened with radiating lines, a quarter of an inch deep being cut into it; on this works another cylinder, the lower surface similarly roughened, with an opening through it in the shape of an inverted truncated cone: to one side of this upper piece is loosely fastened the end of a long pole, and by working this backwards and forwards the upper cylinder is made to revolve and to husk the grain which is passed in at the top and comes out between the two portions of the mill.”

The one, however, in more common use in Talaing villages is of much smaller diameter and is not made to revolve, but is turned back and forth, about half way round, and back again, by means of a transverse shaft passed through the upper part and grasped by the two hands of the operator.

The mortar, or rice pounder, is made from a short length of log, about a foot and a half long, cut quite round and shaped so that it is narrower in the centre. A bowl-like cavity is hewn in the upper end. The part of a Burmese pagoda, between the plantain bud, just under the umbrella, and the serpent's coil, just over the bell, is called the *kha'i* or mortar. When allowance is made for architectural embellishments, the likeness is usually quite apparent.

The pestle is made from a length of hard wood, somewhat cut out in the centre so as to be easily grasped by the hands. Either end may be used for pounding. A girl, in using it, grasps it by the middle with both hands, raises it as high as the arms will go, rising on her toes somewhat at the same time, and then brings it down on the rice in the pounder with full force. The pounder is sometimes used for kneading the dough in making certain kinds of bread or cake. In that case, two persons, standing on opposite sides, usually pound with alternate strokes.

The mortar is sometimes half buried in the ground, in which case it is larger and only roughly shaped outside, and the pounding done by means of a lever worked by the feet. The operator stands on one end of the lever until the further end is raised up, when she allows it to come down with its own weight and a kind of hammer head pounds the rice.

The winnowing basket is a flat, circular and shallow tray-like vessel, the bottom being of twilled bamboo strips split very thin. The rim, about an inch high, is stiffened by strips of thicker bamboo outside, and is surmounted by a hoop of cane tied down by strips of the same material. The women are very skilful in the use of it, throwing up the husked paddy so that the chaff falls to the ground and the cleaned grain falls back into the basket and the pounded rice so that the dust falls down and the rice returns to the basket. A

sieve is also used made in a way similar to the winnowing basket, only that the bamboo strips are narrower and are kept a little apart in weaving the bottom. The winnowing basket is called *kañāai* and the sieve *kañāai jā*.

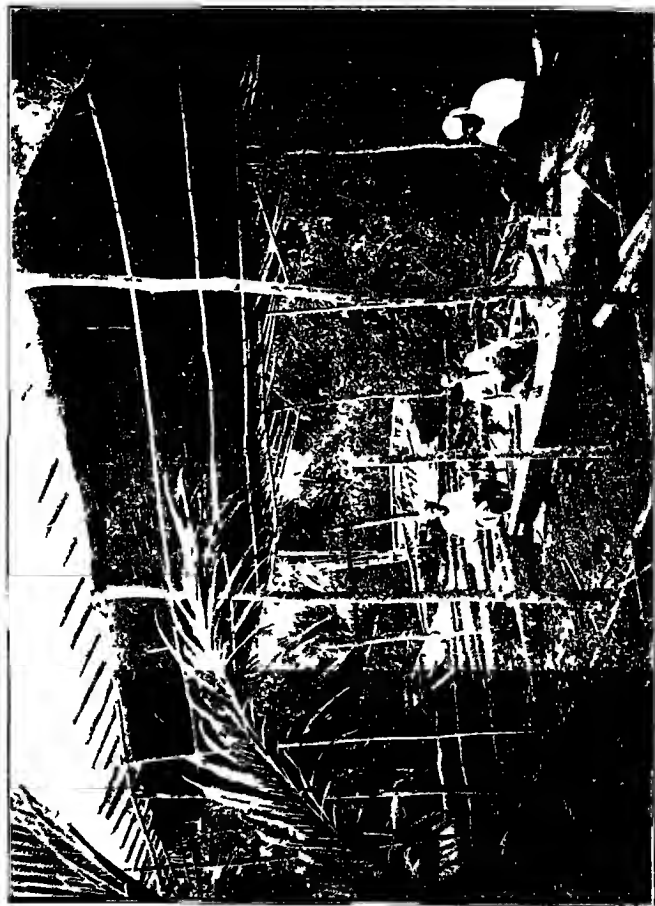
In Talaing villages in Siam the mill above described is not used. When the paddy is husked and cleaned at home, it is simply placed in the mortar and pounded with a large wooden mallet. The paddy is thus husked and then further pounded to take off the inner pellicle. This operation is termed *yāk sro'* and is the expression found in the books. So that this is probably the original Talaing way of cleaning rice.

When the family is moving to or from the fields, all these things have to go with them, and one may see the cart or boat piled with mill, mortar, mats, pots, jars and kitchen utensils.

### Food.

The food of the Talaings is for the most part very simple. There are two meals eaten, one in the morning from seven to eight, and the other in the afternoon about three or four. These hours are not rigidly fixed of course and are only given as a general indication. When people are going away from home to work, they have their first meal as soon as possible and the second one has often to be delayed until they return. Rice is the staple article of food and there is usually a plentiful supply of it. It is eaten with vegetable soups or curries, vegetables cooked or raw and eaten with the *ngapi*, or fish-paste. Fish and flesh are used when they can be had, roasted or made into soups or curries. Rural Talaings spend very little on food-stuffs ordinarily. A supply of paddy where possible is laid by for the year's needs and a sufficient quantity of *ngapi* and salt is bought in the season. The woods are scoured for edible roots, fruits, flowers, and leaves; and a few gourds and vegetables are grown. Then there is abundant animal life in the woods and streams, which is more or less available.





BOAT BUILDING—SPRI ADING IN BOTTOM

On festive occasions there are special delicacies, both at home and on the stalls for sale where the people congregate. At harvest time there are the dainties made of the sticky rice in whole or in part.

This glutinous or sticky rice is prepared in a variety of ways and is a general favourite for eating between meals. It is not in favour for making a regular meal, as it gives a feeling of satiety before the eater has had enough. And yet in the Lao country of Northern Siam it is used as the ordinary rice is used in Burma. This rice is not boiled like ordinary rice, but is preferably steamed when a steamer is available. If to be boiled, it must be put into boiling water and very carefully watched. When cooked plain, a favourite way to eat it is with grated cocoanut and ground sesamum seed. It is also eaten with fried *ngapi* and fish, flesh or fowl, preferably roasted on the coals. Sometimes it is put into joints of bamboo with a little water, and after being closed up is cooked in that state on a fire in the open; a quantity being cooked at one time. When it is sufficiently cooked, the charred part of the bamboo is peeled off. It is then handed round or sold in sticks, the eater splitting it open. When taken out of the bamboo it has a thin skin all round and the stickiness does not appear till the rice itself is broken. Another way is to tie it up in bamboo leaves in little conical packets and steam it. Or it is wrapped with plantain in plantain leaf in oblong packets, two of which are fastened together and steamed in that form. Still another preparation of this is the *tmhān* or bruised rice described in the chapter on agriculture.

#### OCCUPATIONS.

The principal occupation of Talaings may be said to be the work on the land. There are, however, always some who are wholly engaged making their living at various trades. Of these may be named carpentry, wood turning, wood sawing, blacksmithing, tinsmithing, goldsmithing, tailoring and merchandise. In learning any of these trades there is



no special apprenticeship served. A youth usually begins with a skilled craftsman and does the work he is put to and receives the wage he is considered to be worth. He can always command a labourer's wage to begin with and sometimes a little more. Many who have learned a trade only work at it fitfully. They plant their crops and attend to their fruit trees and just take jobs as they come in between times. Many people build their own houses and even their own boats with what help is offered freely. The better houses and the larger boats, however, are made by regular carpenters. Blacksmiths usually work at their trade throughout the year. They are always busy at planting time with diggers, hoes, ploughshares, etc., and at harvest time with reaping hooks; and throughout the year there is a call for hatchets and cleavers. In neighbourhoods where boats are built, they have a lot of work making spikes and adapting bolts. The men who work as assistants to the regular blacksmiths often just take up a job as it is convenient for them. Their work is to attend to the fires, work the bellows, and use the forehammer and the file.

It may be here mentioned that in the Talaing villages in Siam, whilst agriculture is regarded as the principal occupation, a great many of the villagers are occupied in making the leaf thatch which is in such general use for roofing, in pottery of the coarser kinds, in brick-making, and in the carrying of these and other commodities along the waterways of the country in boats. The making of pots and jars and the manufacture of bricks connects them with their ancestry in Burma of the past. In the days of the early European voyagers, Martaban jars, sometimes also called Pegu jars, were articles well known to commerce, and at the present day European scholars are seeking to unravel the mysteries of bricks and tiles of Talaing manufacture found at the old capitals of the Burmese empire.

#### AGRICULTURE.

Talaing villagers in the main are first of all agriculturists. The great crop is the rice crop. Each village has its paddy





AGRICULTURE - FLOUCHING

fields in which the villagers grow sufficient for their own needs and sometimes a little to dispose of as a means of getting some ready money to meet obligations and buy other necessities. A family feels quite easy when it has paid its taxes and has a sufficient supply of paddy for the year. Other food-stuffs can usually be found. For these they have the woods and streams, and occasionally a bit of easy gardening. Sometimes gardening is undertaken on a larger scale with a view to supplying the market. Yams, sugarcane, sweet potatoes, pineapples, and other things are grown, but usually people like best to sit under their own fruit trees. So when a bit of garden land is acquired an endeavour is made to get it planted with such fruit trees as are likely to grow and may supply a felt need.

Some cultivate paddy on a larger scale but, in whatever quantity it is cultivated, the old time methods are still used. When ploughing is necessary, a piece of bent wood, its end shod with iron and having a long shaft to which buffaloes or oxen are yoked, is still the only plough. This does not more than tear up the sod. To a Western eye it seems to be done in any sort of way, but there is some kind of system too in the way in which the plough is driven round the little plot with its banks to keep in the water. The harrow is just like a big rake, with the cattle yoked to the shaft, and having a bow fixed over the rake by which the man keeps control of it. The object in harrowing with this implement is to tear out the grass and weeds after the soil has been loosened by the action of the water, following ploughing or treading out by the cattle. Curiously enough it is this operation with the harrow that gives the general name for the work of preparing the ground for the crop. They are said to *jik bña*, 'prepare the rice ground.' But to say one is harrowing it is still *jik bña* or *jik ti*.

In many cases the rice fields are so far from the village that it is necessary for the whole family to move out and take their abode there for the time. Even when they are within easy walking distance of the village, it is preferred to go out and stay in the fields. A temporary hut is built which serves for a shelter, both whilst tillage is going on and again

when the harvest operations are being conducted. These huts are in some parts called *tāai*, the ordinary name for a dwelling that has not attained the status of a house. In other parts they are called *rāk*, 'a lodge,' a place built for temporary accommodation. A *tāai* is sometimes quite permanent if built in garden land. The men till the land and sow the seed, and the boys herd the cattle. The women perform household duties in which they are assisted by the girls. It is a busy time and the men usually think they are hard worked. The time, however, is pretty much in their own hands, and they have spells of rest when the cattle are feeding or resting.

In the harvest season everybody is busy, both men and women engaging in it. People are usually in the best of spirits then and visitors get a hearty welcome. Then is the time for the glutinous rice. A ready way of using it in the fields is to roast the grain in a potsherd over a fire and then pound it in a mortar until each grain is flattened out and the chaff is easily separated. Visitors sometimes help themselves.

The paddy is reaped with a hook having a long point at the end of the blade, with which to gather the stalks to be cut at each stroke, the left hand being used to grasp them together when thus gathered. The handfuls are laid down in bundles to be bound into sheaves. During the reaping time both loose bundles and bound sheaves may be seen lying about the fields. A threshing floor is prepared convenient to the dwelling, by simply stripping off the sod and leaving the hard earth exposed. The sheaves are brought near and laid in long rows, several sheaves deep and several sheaves high. In lifting the sheaves on the field, a bamboo pole pointed at both ends is used. The sheaves are picked up by sticking one point into one sheaf and the other into another and then the pole is carried over the shoulder. Bundles of straw are carried in the same way. The threshing is done by laying the loosened sheaves out on the threshing floor and setting the cattle to tread the whole. The straw is afterwards gathered off with a wooden rake and the grain is then winnowed by pouring from a height while the wind is blowing.

Besides the ordinary cultivation on the plains, a hill cultivation is sometimes practised. In this method they are said to *bāk gū*, 'to cut a clearing.' This way is used where there is plenty of forest land available by those who have no paddy land, and sometimes as a handy way of getting a sufficiency of grain for the year's needs. The operations necessary in preparing the land in this case are the cutting down of the jungle, the burning up of the fallen trees, and the gathering of the charred remains. Very large trees are often either left standing or simply limbed, and they may be afterwards seen rearing their great skeleton forms about the clearing. The method of planting is for a man to take a digger and just make a hole here and there with a single stroke, whilst his wife or children follow and drop a few seeds into each hole. There is no previous digging. To ensure a good crop it is necessary to keep the ground well weeded until the plants are grown up. The success of the crop is in proportion to the weeding done.

#### FISHING.

Fish, as will be seen from the chapter on food, is an essential part of the Talaing dietary in some form or another. In the form of dried or salted fish and as *ngapi*, or fish paste, a great deal of it is obtained from the Tavoy and Mergui fisheries, but there is a good deal of fish also procured locally. The appliances used for procuring it are various. Fishing with a rod and line, or with a line from a boat, is quite in evidence. It is done often just in spare time, and for the purpose of supplying the pot, but a man will sometimes go forth with the object of getting fish to sell for what it will bring. A favourite way is to go out in a little dug-out canoe and either simply float or anchor at some likely place. Prawns are sometimes taken in this way, but with a hook without a barb. This operation is called *ḡan ka*, 'to catch fish with bait.' The hook is called *khanon*, the line *juh khanon* and the rod *juiw khanon*. The bait is called *ḡaran*.

The cast net, *jnik*, is also much used. It is bell-shaped with a cord at the upper end for keeping hold of it when cast. The mouth is weighted with a chain of lead, and little pockets to detain the fish are made by tying it up at intervals. In rivers and larger creeks, a boat is used with one person to steer and another to cast the net. In smaller creeks or streams, the operator wades or walks along the bank in getting from place to place. In tidal streams the time chosen is at low water when the flood begins to make. This operation is called *grāt jnik*, the action being much the same as in sowing, which is *grāt ma*. *Jā*, the drag net, is also used, though it is mostly known nowadays by the Burmese name *paik*. Fishing nets in general are termed *jnik jā*.

The *karut*, a bell-shaped basket, open at the bottom and having a small hole in the top, is used in shallow waters, such as ponds and flooded marshes. The operator takes a *karut* in each hand and, wading through the water with great strides, puts them down as he leans forward at almost every step. When fish is felt to be covered, he puts in his hand at the hole in the top and secures them. This operation is called *kuiṭ ka*.

Sometimes the mouth of a small offshoot of a tidal creek is closed up with a flexible bamboo screen which prevents the fish from getting out; and when the tide has sufficiently ebbed, the fish are caught by hand or dipped up with a bucket. This operation is termed *cut kamuh*. The bamboo screen is the *kamuh*.

The *kamin* is a cylindrical basket made of split bamboo twined with cane. It is closed at one end and has a funnel-shaped opening at the other through which the fish find their way to the bait inside, but it is difficult, or impossible, for them to come out again. Sometimes another additional funnel-shaped opening is formed inside the basket and sometimes there are two. The *kamuh* is sometimes used in conjunction with this, the mouth of the *kamin* affording the only apparent opening. This operation is called *pām kamin*.

Crabs are caught by enticing them with a piece of fish at the end of a string. When the crab nibbles, the line is pulled

in, and, if he holds on till he comes to the surface, he is deftly taken up with a scoop or basket. Smaller crabs and shellfish are often obtained by just groping for them with the hands. *Glāai glok ca knu gatām*, 'searched and groped for shellfish and crabs,' is an expression used of a king of Pegu who was fond of fishing.

In the fine season a great many families spend all their time at the *damañ*, 'fishing traps.' It is here that one of the kinds of *ngapi*, or fish paste, is made. There are two kinds of *ngapi* in use by the Talaings, *pharok damañ* and *pharok dawāi*. The latter is the Tavoy *ngapi* which is conveyed in boats from Tavoy and Mergui. The former, however, is the kind made in connection with the fishing traps now to be described, and is the kind in more general use. One sees occasional descriptions of the making of this commodity by writers on Burma and Siam, which point it out as a rather disgusting business. I have seen nothing in the way in which it is made by Talaings on the Tenasserim coast to throw it into discredit as far as the manufacture is concerned; we may all have our own views about the finished article. It is somewhat striking that the Talaings in Siam use the phrase *pharok damañ* in speaking generally of raw *ngapi*, without often having an idea what the *damañ* is.

The *damañ* is a large, funnel-shaped trap of split bamboo and cane ending in a closer woven pipe-like part which is detachable, so that it can be raised to get the catch. They are anchored to stakes fixed into the bottom of the shallower waters about the mouths of rivers and creeks. All that is seen of them on the surface is the float, consisting of two upright pieces of bamboo fastened to each other by a longer horizontal piece. The stakes have to be driven in under water. A stout rattan rope having been fastened to the stake, it is pushed down by a stout pole hollowed at the end to receive the upper end of the stake and hold it in place whilst the stake is being tamped firmly into the ground. These traps turn with the tide, the mouth always facing the flow of water. Sometimes they get adrift and may be seen floating far away from the fishing station. One man usually owns about ten of these traps. At the



turn of the tide, he goes out in his little dugout and, raising each trap in turn, he pours the contents into a basket. When all has been made right again, he takes the basket ashore and spreads its contents on a mat. There are all kinds of little fish and prawns. Some not desired are picked out and thrown away. Bigger ones are picked out for the pot. "Bombay ducks" are sometimes found and, being considered a special delicacy, are reserved. The main part of the catch is allowed to dry in the sun, spread out on the mats. The fish are afterwards put into a mortar and pounded. When pounded to the consistency of a stiff paste, it is put into moulds and turned out in lumps of five viss each. Most of it is sold on the spot, people going there to buy the year's supply, and dealers going for what they feel able to cope with. When it is taken home, it is broken up and put out in the sun. Then it is mixed with a great quantity of salt and pounded, before being put into earthenware jars to be stored for use. The fishermen engaged in this work come out with their families and live in temporary huts for the season.

#### HUNTING.

The religion of the Talaings no doubt curbs the hunting instincts to a certain extent; still it does not deter some from following the chase in its milder forms. The younger men especially, whilst ever ready to defend the precept which enjoins abstention from the taking of life against anyone who would claim divine sanction for the opposite practice, often show just as much readiness to join in when there is a chance of bringing down game. In the books, too, the hunter is always quite prominent. He saunters forth from the capital to roam the jungle, *glāai pan poh ca*, 'to search for opportunities of using the bow.' He it is who brings back to the palace the news of any rural beauty of surpassing charms who has appeared; or he brings back from the woods some jungle product by which the power of the king is enhanced.

Nowadays, with the restrictions of the Arms Act, there is little chance for Talaings doing much with the gun. Still some have learned to use it and are ready for any opportunity of going out in its company. They often have the excuse that if they do not hunt the sambhur and the wild boar, their crops will suffer, and they quiet their conscience of any religious scruple by urging the necessity of ridding their lands of the pests. Both deer and wild pig are often a menace to the crops.

Sometimes parties are formed to cope with these spoilers and get something for the larder at the same time. A rude V-shaped barricade is made by simply cutting down the brushwood and piling it so as to form a low fence. Just where the two sides of the barricade meet, a space is left, and in this sharpened stakes are set in the ground at an acute angle with the points turned in. The animals are then driven toward the enclosure, the shape of which is designed so that they will run straight to the opening and pitch themselves on the pointed stakes. Sometimes the stakes are simply fixed at a convenient place, without any converging enclosure, on the path the animals are known to follow and the pig or deer are driven towards them. The stakes are called *gamuy*, and hunting in this fashion is called *pām gamuy*.

The crossbow, called *tīa*, is used in shooting monkeys, flying squirrels, flying foxes, scaly ant-eaters, and even pigeons. The bow is plain and is made of hard flexible wood. *Sāmsat*, described in Judson's Burmese Dictionary as "a species of melanorrhæa [the *Stereospermum fimbriatum*]," is one of the kinds used. A Burmese will tell you that this wood is called *thanthat*, because it is so hard that it destroys the nails driven into it. There is reason, however, to believe that the name is of Talaing origin and connects it with *sān*, 'the black varnish tree.' Judson's Dictionary in fact indicates a connection between the two trees. The bow is tapered at both ends where it is notched to receive the string. The stock is of a different wood.

Bowstrings are made from two kinds of creepers, one being used in the rains, because not so ready to snap

when wet, and the other in the fine season. The one creeper is prepared by stripping the bark and taking the inner fibre, which is shredded and dried in the sun; the other is pounded and teased. The string is simply twisted by rolling between the hands. It is made in two pieces with a loop at one end. The two free ends are joined and the whole twisted together to make the splice. The string is made a palm breadth shorter than the bow. The loop at one end is made small enough to be held on the notch at the end of the bow, and the other one large enough to be released from the notch and slip along the bow when it straightens. When not in use the bow is perfectly straight. In making ready to shoot, the bow is first slightly bent so as to slip the loop of the string back to its notch. The bow is then further bent until the string can be drawn back to the notch made to hold it on the stock. The string is released by a trigger pressed by the forefinger under the stock. A piece of thread is wrapped round at the point where the arrow rests to protect the string. The arrows are made of bamboo, feathered with a piece of palm or other stiff leaf let into a slit. The barb is poisoned by a gum, fatal to birds and monkeys, but the presence of the poison does not prevent the people from using the flesh for food. The arrows are carried in a quiver made from a joint of bamboo and hung from the shoulder by means of a string. The arrow is called *lau*, and to shoot with a crossbow is *pan tha*. In the books *kam*, 'a missile or bolt,' is applied to arrows, but is now only used of bullets or shot.

The bullet-bow, *puoh*, is used to shoot birds and frighten away animals from food-stuffs exposed in the open. It is made of bamboo and is sometimes reinforced by a few inches of the same material tied down at the grip by means of cord. The bowstring, which is double, is made of ordinary twine, just the length required and the two ends are joined together. Loops are made by tying the two strings together with thread a little way back from the doubling at the two ends. Notches are made on the ends of the bow to receive the loops. A small net to hold the bullet joins the two strings in the centre. The bullets are

clay balls dried in the sun. Sometimes little stones take their place. When a person uses a bullet-bow he is said to *poh pñoh*. The two verbs *pan* and *poh* are combined in the books to convey the general idea of shooting with bows.

#### POTTERY.

Pottery of a coarser kind is made by the Talaings. Rice plates, curry bowls, etc., are now bought in the bazaar and in the old days such things were not in use. When the family sat down to a meal the rice was heaped on a wooden platter and the members sat round and ate from one dish. One has to go to out-of-the-way Karen villages now to see this manner of taking a meal. I saw once in a Karen village in the Talaing country a mother and her children sitting at a meal in this fashion. The rice was heaped on a large wooden platter called a *kwak* by the Talaings. The different members of the family sat round and ate with their fingers from this one dish. The rice and curry pots were set at a convenient distance and the fish-paste and vegetables were placed on the edge of the platter. This, I had previously been told, was the way in which Talaings ate their meals in the olden days before the introduction of rice plates of foreign manufacture.

The rice and curry pots and smaller water pots such as the women use in carrying water, the *dāk nuñ* which is carried on the head, and the *dāk klāñ*, which is carried on the hip with the arm round its neck, are sometimes made in the village. The women combine, make a sufficient number, and have them all fired in one heap. A wheel or turntable is used in moulding them. A lump of clay is put on the wheel, and the operator, turning the wheel with one hand, moulds with the other. A pattern is made on the outside by patting all round with a stick having the necessary carving. For the firing process the pots are built in a heap in the open with a sufficient quantity of fuel. Pots are also made for sale up river from Moulmein.

I have had opportunities of watching the Talaing potters at Pakret on the Menam, a few miles above Bangkok. The art was brought over from Burma by their forefathers who migrated thither some one hundred and sixty years ago. It is thus an old Talaing industry transplanted from Burma and carried on in Siam. They make only larger and smaller water jars and basins and the mortars used in the kitchen for pounding peppers, etc., by the medicine men for preparing their herbs, and by the toothless for beating up their chewing materials.

The moulding is done in great, oblong sheds which are merely a roof of the palm-leaf thatch; the edge of the roof coming to within a foot or so of the ground. The space is filled in with more leaves. The hanging door of the same material is partly in the roof. The back part of the shed is used for storing the moulded pots until they are ready to be removed to the kiln. Toward the front and in the centre of the floor, which is the solid earth, is the great heap of clay, some two feet high, with basins of water on the top ready to keep it moist. From this stock-heap a smaller quantity is taken and laid in the corner nearest the potter, who sits just by the door. This smaller heap is only a few inches in thickness, and from it the assistant, who is often a woman, can separate a sufficient quantity with the fingers. Two pieces are separated and one taken in each hand. These are banged together with the full force of the two arms spread out for the purpose. The resultant lump is broken in two and the process repeated. After this has been done some half dozen times, the lump of clay is squeezed out with the fingers into a long ribbon or fillet ready for the potter. This work is done between the times of turning the wheel, when the potter is occupied in putting on the clay, or doing one or other of the little jobs when he does not require anyone to turn the wheel.

To turn to the potter and his implements. His wheel is cut from a solid block of wood and presents a table some two feet in diameter and some two inches thick. Underneath is a rounded lump pierced for the pivot which is fixed

in the ground. The table is just clear of the ground, a hole being made for the rounded block below. The wheel is turned by the hand or naked foot, simply pressing on the edge to keep it spinning. In making the large water jars of 24 to 32 gallons capacity, the work is done in two operations. The bottom is first formed, beginning narrow and widening out until the extreme width of the jar is reached. It is then set out to harden in the sun somewhat, and the upper part is not added until the following day.

To begin at the bottom part, the potter sits on a low seat which raises him only a few inches from the ground. In front of him is the wheel. On his left lie the ribbons of clay prepared by his assistant. To his right stands a basin of water with a strip of folded cloth lying over the edge and partly in the water. A shell for smoothing the inside and a hoop of bamboo for scraping the outside lie at hand. A stick sharpened at the end stands against the wall behind. On the wheel there is always some clay, a few inches in thickness, which seems to keep the vessel in place. On top of this is put a square piece of board by which the jar is carried about when the moulding is finished. The potter picks up a ribbon of clay, throws one end over his shoulder, and gradually lays it on the board, turning the wheel with his foot as he requires. When he has laid on sufficient clay, roughly shaped, and is ready for turning, the assistant comes forward and turns the wheel. The potter takes up the wetted cloth, and pressing it with his fingers on the revolving clay, the vessel gradually takes shape. Then with the shell held inside by the left hand and the bamboo hoop held outside with his right, he smooths the sides and gets the required thickness. He measures the width from edge to edge with his stick, and with its point cuts off the superfluous clay from the bottom. The lower part of the jar thus finished is carried out into the sun by means of the board below.

Next, these bottoms, having been taken into the back part of the shed over night, are brought forward, one by one, and the upper part completed. The sides are built up and

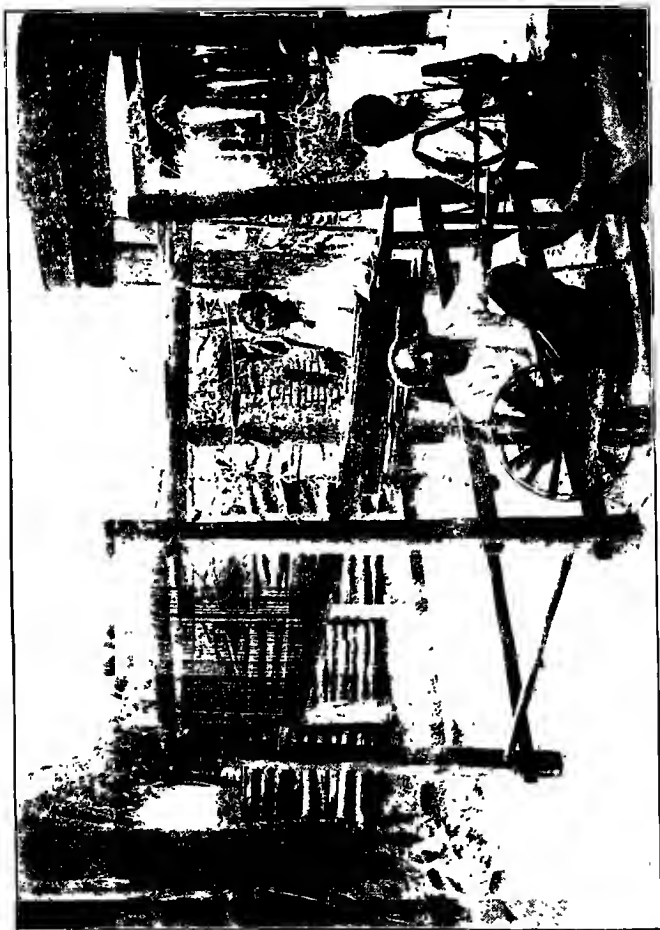
roughly fashioned with the ribbons of clay as before and the whole is smoothed and shaped by means of the wet cloth, the shell and the hoop in the deft fingers of the potter. The joining of the upper and lower parts is very particularly done. When the vessel is fully formed, the join is smoothed inside and out and a ribbon of clay put on and pressed in all round the outside and again scraped and smoothed. For this second part of the operation the potter changes his low seat for a four-legged stool.

The mortars and smaller jars are moulded in one operation. In turning the smaller vessel, one person would be able to turn the wheel and mould at the same time, but they can get through more work by working with a person for each of these operations. The mortars are moulded on the top of the clay on the turntable, without the intervening board, and then cut off with a wire as the wheel revolves. The mortar is sufficiently firm of itself to be lifted by the hands and placed out to dry.

The kiln in which the vessels are fired is an ungainly structure, the arched top of which somewhat resembles the back of an elephant. The walls are of brick, fastened with clay, and are made several feet thick. At one end is an opening through which the vessels are carried in; at the other is a hole on the top to emit smoke and a roof of thatch is built over to keep off the rain. The length of the kiln inside is seven fathoms, the width seven cubits, and the height eight cubits and a span. There is a raised, brick platform on which the pots are built, a space being left free at the outer end for the fire. When ready for the fire, the opening is partly built up, the other half being left open to feed the fire and admit the air. The fire has to be kept going day and night for fifteen days. The people take turns of six hours each at tending the fire, one person starting at six in the morning and working on till midday, a second change being made at sunset and a third at midnight, and so on. Visitors are allowed to put in sticks of firewood to feed the fire, one stick on one side and another on the other alternately, and thus they can afterwards say they have fired pottery.







WEAVING—LOOM, SPINNING WHEEL AND WINDER.

A list of the contents of a kiln at one firing gives an idea of capacity :

- 200 large jars to contain 32 gallons each
- 200 large jars to contain 24 gallons each
- 1,000 medium jars;
- 500 small jars;
- 500 smaller jars;
- 100 wide-mouthed water pots to contain 8 gallons;
- 100 large mortars;
- 300 smaller mortars;
- 1,000 very small mortars;
- 300 large basins;
- 200 small basins.

#### WEAVING.

The Talaing women still weave a good deal of the cloth used by themselves and their men folk. A loom is usually to be seen in most houses in a Talaing village. In Lower Siam the weaving of cloth often marks one of the distinctions between Talaing and Siamese women. As in Burma, however, so in Siam, home weaving is more and more falling out of use, a good deal of cloth being bought in the bazaar. Looms are to be seen throughout the villages and the people themselves are often to be distinguished by their garments of the home-made stuff. In Burma cottons are woven for loin cloths, coverlets, and sometimes for jackets. These articles are woven in pieces the actual size required. In each case the stuff is joined in two widths to attain the breadth for the garment. In Siam the cloth is woven the actual width required for the garment. Another distinction between Talaing weaving in Burma and in Siam is that, in the former, checks are the rule for loin cloths; whereas, in the latter, plain colours of a rather dull kind are more in vogue. In Siam a somewhat superior loin cloth is made by mixing silk with the cotton. The warp is all of cotton and in some cases the weft is of silk and cotton alternately in different colours. This gives a somewhat faint stripe across

the material. In other cases, the weft is all of silk, which, with the difference in colours, gives a shot appearance. A distinction is also made in the plain cloth for the women by mixing black with the original colour in the weft.

Nowadays, the cotton used is the imported, spun cotton sold in the bazaar. In the olden times, however, the Talaings grew their own cotton as the Karens do still. We find in the writings names of implements used in preparing the cotton. In the instructions for entering a new house, the gin for separating the cotton from the seeds, and the basket and bow for teasing the cotton, as well as the cotton winder which is still in use, are mentioned (see the chapter on Houses). The *hat twuih*, or gin, is like a tiny mangle with the rollers grooved slantwise. The *thduih*, or basket, had a kind of hood, and the *thā*, or bow, was a plain one of bamboo with a string of rattan. The spinning wheel, *hat*, too, a relic of the days of yore, is still seen, as it is also used to fill the spool for the shuttle. These operations of ginning, teasing and spinning the cotton, with the necessary implements, can still be seen in Karen villages contiguous to Talaing villages in the Tenasserim Division.

The spun cotton is prepared by washing and drying, stiffening with rice water and combing and drying again. It is then wound on large bobbins for mounting the warp or on little spools for the shuttle.

To mount the warp, six wooden pegs are driven into the ground, either under a house or in the open. The space required varies with the size of the web. Two pegs are driven in about two feet apart at one end of the space and four in a kind of square at the other. The cotton wound on bobbins is carried on bamboo sticks in the left hand, two at a time; whilst with the right hand the threads are guided round the pegs by means of a stick having a piece of bent wire which keeps the two threads apart and allows them to run free. The bobbins are held up so that the thread freely unwinds as it is guided round the pegs. The threads are taken round two of the four pegs and back again, being crossed between the two. They are then carried round the two pegs at the other end and right round to the other two

of the four. The threads are taken back again the way they came, after being crossed between the two pegs, as on the other side. The woman thus marches up one side of this kind of parallelogram, round and down the other side and back again ; thus retracing her steps each time she turns at that end of the space where the four pegs are. The crossing between the two pegs gives the necessary shed when mounted on the loom. When different colours are required, the threads are counted and the bobbins changed when a change of colour is wanted.

The weaving is done on a loom which has a rude resemblance to the old-fashioned hand-loom of Western countries. The frame consists of four posts connected by two battens along each of two sides and one end, one being at the top and the other lower down. At the end where the weaver sits there is one at the top only. The reed hangs by two cords fastened to a piece of bamboo laid across the top of the frame. The heddles are similarly hung to a bamboo laid across, only each of the two is tied to the end of a short piece of bamboo held in the middle, so that when one is depressed the other is raised. The end of the warp is fastened to the transverse batten just above the weaver's head where she sits on a board laid across the side battens. At first it is simply tied to the batten, but as it grows shorter it is held by a cord. It is passed round over the top, and down the back, and spread out in the horizontal position by means of the batten at the level of the heddles and reed. The two sets of threads are kept apart, as they were crossed in laying them out, by means of two bamboo sticks. The shed is made by depressing and raising the two heddles by two cords hanging below, with pieces of cocoanut shell which enable the weaver to hold them between the toes. The weft is thrown with the right hand by means of a shuttle which is received by the left and thrown back again to be received by the right, and so on. The weft is beaten up by the reed each time, both hands being used, so that the weaver throws the shuttle with one hand, pulls the thread through with the other, beats up with the reed, using both hands, changes the position of the feet to make the shed and

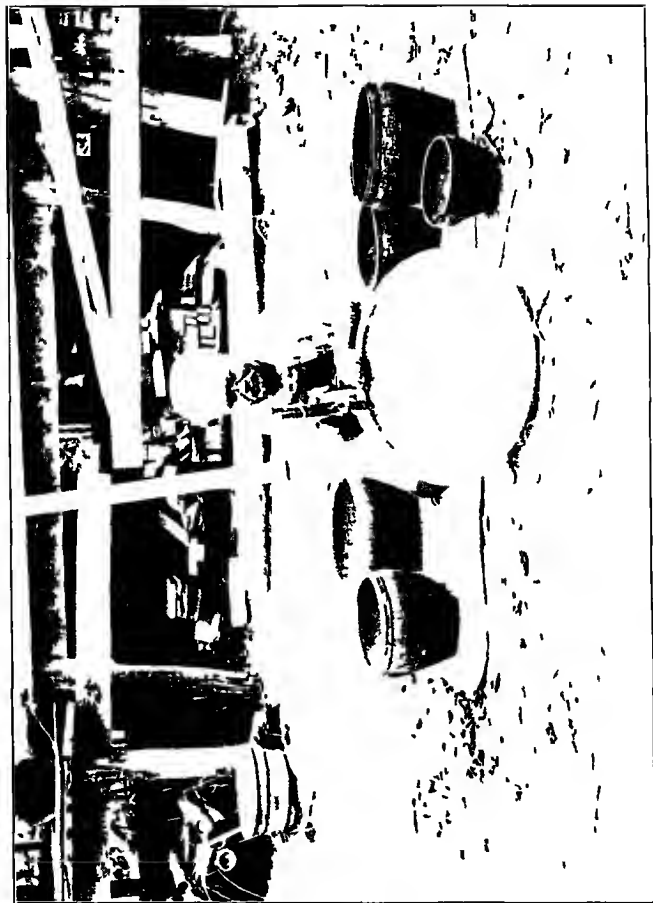
is ready for another thread. As the cloth is woven, it is rolled on the cloth-beam which is simply a piece of wood or bamboo mortised in four holes at one end, so that it fits on the tenon of a little standard fixed in the frame. At the other end the standard is simply notched, the tension of the warp holding it in place. The beam is turned by lifting it off, giving it a quarter of a turn and putting it on the little standard at another hole, the warp being sufficiently loosened above. A spike is fixed at each end of the reed, carrying two loose iron rings which jingle each time the reed is brought forward. This gives to the operation the sound heard when the village maids are busy at this branch of domestic labour.

The reed and heddles are only seen on the loom when in use. In fact, there seems to be a free system of borrowing and lending and, whilst almost every house has the frame of the loom, the reed and heddles have often to be borrowed as required.

To weave is *tut tut*, and to mount the warp is *galuñ tut*; so that *tut* is apparently a noun meaning 'warp' and a verb with the meaning of 'weave,' though it is not used alone. The loom is called *kmeñ yan* or *kmuñ yan*; the heddles are *tayyau* and the reed *nek hat*.

#### BASKETRY, MATTING, AND WATTLEWORK.

The various baskets in use, such as the rice and winnowing basket, and the various carrying baskets, are all made locally. There is, however, hardly such a thing as a person making his living solely by this kind of work. It is done by people in their spare time or by those whose occupation allows for work of the kind between times. Persons minding cattle, when they would be otherwise idle, may be seen, in wood or field, busy splitting and preparing the bamboo and cane, or fashioning these materials into the various articles used in their homes. Old men, too, now retired from active outdoor pursuits, often spend their



BASKETRY—RURAL AGRICULTURE



time pleasantly and profitably in this way. The household needs are thus supplied and the surplus is sold to those who have not the time or inclination to make the articles for themselves. Most village Talaings seem able to do something at this kind of work.

Baskets are in the main twilled work of split bamboo, cane being used in the binding only. Certain carrying baskets and some for rougher household use are made of wickerwork. Any stiffening is usually done with stronger pieces of bamboo. Thus the square bottom of the ordinary rice basket is made and kept in form by crossing two pieces of bamboo and bending the ends up at the corners. It is further strengthened with cane. The rim is formed of a hoop of whole cane and is further strengthened with hoops of bamboo in and out.

Mats are made by the women much in the same way as baskets are made by the men; that is, they do the work in leisure time or when impelled to it by necessity. A very common kind of mat in Talaing villages is made from the leaf of a kind of reed growing in marshy places. The women go out and cut the leaves, bring them home in bundles, and slit them by cutting along the corners with a sharp knife. It is usually woven almost green in a twilled pattern. As the leaf is slit, it is laid out to dry somewhat, but, as it is more pliable in the fresh state, it is not allowed to dry altogether before being woven. Another kind of mat, considered of a better quality, is made from a long reed which grows on the hills. After being cut into suitable lengths, it is boiled and sometimes dyed in different colours, so as to introduce variety in the design. Both these kinds of mats are made by the women. A bamboo matting of a stiffer kind, upon which people spread the paddy to dry in the sun, is also made. This kind is made by men as the baskets are. Mats for the floor, both for sitting and sleeping, are called *dakaw*; whilst those used when spreading out the paddy are called *hnā*. In the books, mats used by exalted personages are called *snā*, and the term is still used in speaking of the mats on which the monks sit.



The word used of the weaving of baskets and mats is *tān*, as *tān na*, 'to make baskets'; *tān dakaw*, 'to weave mats'; as if *tān* meant to weave with the fingers in contradistinction to *tut*, 'to weave with a loom.'

Some of the operations connected with house building and in the construction of fish traps are of a very similar nature, and there the same word *tān* often applies. The walls of houses are sometimes of bamboo, checker or twilled, work; and to this and even the framework to which the thatch walling is fastened the word *tān* also applies. In laying a bamboo floor, twined with cane, they are said to *twaw knī*, 'twine the floor.' So with the clamp for the ridge of the roof. The operations in making the fishing traps are *tān* or *twaw*, as it is woven or twined.

#### THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE.

Anyone who fancies he knows a few remedies and can persuade others to adopt his treatment may be a doctor. A man simply begins with what he knows, is learning all the time, and gains the confidence of the people by his success in the treatment of their ailments. To have, however, a thorough grasp of the various systems of treatment, as laid down in the medical books, one would need to be possessed of no mean knowledge of the human system and the various substances, vegetable, animal and mineral, which enter into the Talaing pharmacopœia, together with many other odds and ends which do not appear in the curriculum for a Western medical degree.

When the services of the village doctor are required, a visit is paid to him, wherever he may be, and a rupee given him. He is then obliged, on accepting this payment, to make three visits and provide the remedies. If he has to go beyond village bounds, foot hire must be given. The foot hire often amounts to more than the actual fee. The necessary item in calling the doctor would seem to be the giving of the rupee. A man was noticed on one occasion working his way on hands and knees through a crush

seated on the floor. Reaching the side of the *acāsaw*, he stretched out his hand and held the rupee up before the medical gentleman's face, without saying a word. The latter turned round and made some remonstrance, but went away after a short interval. Some of their treatment is at times rather crude, but many of them know a good deal about things. They are usually wise enough to adopt the simpler Western remedies which have at any rate the advantages of concentrated form and consequent easier handling and quicker and surer action. The native medicines are either boiled in a pot and the liquid used, or the ingredients are pounded and formed into rather large pills and dried in the sun. Large doses have to be taken. Seasons and days and months have often to be taken into account in prescribing, but this is usually in the more critical cases.

Besides the system of cures by the use of medicinal herbs, roots, etc., there is another system of treating diseases by regulating the diet. The theory is that one of the four elements or primary substances which constitute the body, viz., air, earth, fire and water, is out of due proportion, and the right thing is to feed the patient so as to restore the balance. In order to know what diet to prescribe the practitioner consults a set of formulas. He takes the age of the person, divides by eight and uses the formula indicated by the remainder. Then, according to the state of the bowels, loose or constipated, certain fruits and spices are to be prepared with coarse palm sugar, or different sorts of flesh or herbs are to be made into curries and eaten. The physician makes his own selection. Thus nutmeg or cardamoms and palmyra palm sugar; orange, citron, or Otaheite gooseberry with palm sugar; horseflesh, pork, beef, the flesh of the tortoise, etc., and *ka khatet* (fish) is to be made into curry and eaten with rice.

The Paklat medical book also gives some attention to dieting the four elements, but there it is more in the nature of ordinary medical treatment, or that with a special dietary combined. In fact there is a very sensible recognition of the medicinal qualities of ordinary food-stuffs throughout in the general treatment of disease and pain.

## MUSIC AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

The Talaings are quite musical in their way and have a great many different instruments. I think they are, if anything, more musical than the Burmese. I remember on the occasion of the local celebrations in connection with the coronation of King George the Fifth, the township officer at Ye, in the Amherst district, calling my attention to a Talaing orchestra from one of the villages. He evidently looked upon it as different from the Burmese and was highly pleased with it. One may hear music at all kinds of gatherings of the people. Funerals, birth feasts, *nat* dances, pagoda feasts, and marriages, all have their music. Theatricals could not, of course, be without it. In the books there is a good deal of reference to it. It is intimately associated with regal splendors. One of the attributes of royalty seemed to be the ability to call for music and the dance at pleasure. On great occasions, such as coronations and other pageants, the companies of musicians and dancers were quite a feature of the processions. At such times the music was compared to the sound of the heaving ocean, or it was said to overcome the sound of the roaring sea. Curiously enough the manifestations of a great grief on one occasion are compared to the same great wonder. "They struck their breasts and wailed like the sound of the heaving sea." Of the instruments named in the books some are mere names now.

They still have many different kinds of drums, some large, some small; some are beat on one end and some are beat on two ends simultaneously. There are dulcimers of various kinds, gongs, cymbals of two kinds, one large and the other small, wind instruments like the flute, the clarion, the trumpet. The conch shell seems to have been in use in former days. Of stringed instruments there are the violin and harp. Large bamboo clappers are used, but these are in one piece, a length of bamboo being split at one end and somewhat cut out in the centre. One side is pulled and allowed to clap back on the other whilst the instrument is held with its whole end on the ground or floor.



MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS USED AT THE KATOK DANCE



### SECTION III.—SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

#### BIRTH.

IN describing the customs of the Talaings, there will be much that they have in common with the Burmese and, indeed, with other Indo-Chinese races who have reached the same stage of civilization. I have so far not seen anything in the literature relating to the lying-in and related customs, and what I set down here is a description of the actual practices. It differs somewhat from accounts I have seen of the Burmese customs. The Talaings have in common with the Burmese, Siamese and others, the practice of submitting lying-in women to the application of fire. It is popularly supposed to bring them back to the normal condition of things. It is therefore understood that in the Western practice the same results are brought about by the use of drugs. In and near the towns there is no doubt that the native practice is gradually giving way to the Western method, but in the villages generally the old *regime* is practically unaffected.

In preparation for the expected birth, it is most particular that the firewood should be got ready and it is necessary that it should be specially cut for that purpose. As it is usual to get it ready in the last month or so, and as there are disabilities attached to the eighth month of gestation, it is ruled that the firewood must be cut either in the seventh or ninth month. If, however, one stick is cut in the seventh month the rule is considered to have been observed and the remainder may be cut at any time. It is usually green wood, smoke evidently being desirable as well as heat. In cutting the wood (young saplings) the first tree must fall clear to the ground. Should it fall and lie against another tree it is rejected. When the wood is piled and ready for

use, a piece of thorny wood or thorny bamboo must be laid across on top of the pile.

A lying-in bed, *joñ phau*, *lit.* a fireplace bedstead, has also to be prepared, just before the event. This may be of bamboo or of plantain stalk or of part of the firewood split up. It has no feet and is just laid on the floor. There are the sides of whole pieces of bamboo, when it is of that material, five cross pieces, and the whole is laid with eleven lengths of split bamboo. If eleven is not sufficient two pieces must be added so as to avoid having twelve pieces.

The special fireplace or hearth, on which the fire is built, is made up by the midwife after her arrival, the women folk helping under her instruction. She sends any one for the earth to fill it in, but the women may often be seen with hoe and basket getting it. It is, of course, as in other parts of the world, an occasion of great interest, and the women neighbours gather in and render help and advice. A corner of the house near the door is usually screened off by means of a stout screen of bamboo framework and leaf thatch. No men are allowed inside at the time of accouchement and the male doctor is only called in cases of special difficulty beyond the skill of the midwife.

On behalf of the child a present for the midwife is prepared. One rupee is placed in the bottom of any small vessel and some betel-nut and betel-leaf. The midwife takes one chew of the betel and leaves the rest. On the betel-nut and leaves in the dish is stuck with its end up a spool of cotton just as it is made ready for the shuttle in weaving. This is used in making the string to tie the navel cord, which is then cut with a splinter of bamboo.

As soon as the babe has been bathed, the midwife proceeds to "set" the shoulder and hip joints, they being supposed to be dislocated or not in their proper setting yet. To this end she puts a little salt on each joint in turn stamping her foot on the ground each time. The body is smeared with turmeric. The mother too is bathed and smeared with a mixture of turmeric and lime. Hot stones are applied to the body in place of the bandage of the Western treatment. This treatment with the fire and the

hot stones should go on until the change of moon, though three days is considered the time necessary to accomplish the full treatment. In ordinary cases, when labour proceeds with regularity, all goes well. When things are moving slowly, however, there is a tendency to try to hurry on the procedure. Even in difficult cases, the midwife often shows a good deal of skill and knowledge of her duties. In cases of extreme difficulty there is no means of dealing with them adequately, and it is then that the method of treatment is apt to be termed somewhat barbarous.

#### BIRTH FEAST.

For each child born there is what may be called a birth festival. It should take place soon after birth, but is usually postponed till a more convenient season or till the slack time of the year. March and April are the months when it mostly takes place. It is known as *caw kapo*, which means pouring a decoction of the soap acacia. A potful of that is prepared and also a potful of turmeric water. The baby is bathed by the midwife first, and afterwards by the guests, by pouring the water over it. A *dah* or cleaver with its point in the earth is held by the father beneath to convey the spent water to the earth. The hands of the midwife are also washed. All who were present at the birth or called to make enquiries must be invited to this ceremony. There is usually a mild feasting, and music is often added. A kind of liquid pudding seems to be the correct thing on such occasions. It consists of boiled drops of batter, cooled and served with a plentiful supply of sauce sweetened with coarse brown sugar. It is served in little cups arranged on trays and guests are invited to drink it.

#### TRAINING AND EDUCATION.

As they grow up the girls begin early to help their mothers in household duties. They help to take care of the younger children, learn to cook the rice very early and by and by



learn to weave. When the family has anything to sell by way of garden produce or when it decides on a bit of trading in a small way, it is the girls who go forth carrying the wares in a tray on the head. This is the Burma custom. In Siam even the Mon women are accustomed to carry loads by means of a yoke on the shoulder.

The boys too very early begin to help their fathers in the outside work. Where the occupation is agriculture, as in the majority of cases, the boys are required to mind the cattle. When seven or eight years of age or so, the more fortunate go to the monastery to learn their letters and incidentally the rudiments of their religion. Some of them stay at the monastery, returning home only when necessary for the afternoon or evening meal. There is always plenty of food at the monastery in the forenoon, but there is not always a sufficiency for the afternoon. Many boys, however, are often so occupied with cattle herding and other duties that they get no opportunity of learning to read and write until they go to the monastery as probationers or monks.

#### COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

Early marriage is the rule amongst village Talaings. The young people very soon learn to take an interest in the opposite sex, and as there is no need felt for waiting until the young man's position is assured, the courtship is not protracted. The custom, which is pretty general, of the bridegroom going to live at the house of his father-in-law at the beginning of the married life, makes it easy to arrange the marriage at once. The usual custom is for the bridegroom to bring his belongings with him and just settle down with the bride's people. The rule is that he should help his father-in-law for three years; the father-in-law on his part being bound to provide him with work. At the end of that time he can, if he chooses, build a house and set up a separate household. It is quite common to see several couples in the same house with the old people.

The young people meet at religious and other festivals, theatrical and other gatherings. When an interest in each other has been excited it is easy for a young couple to contrive to meet and see a good deal of each other. Opportunities are found even during the day, as, for instance, when the girl is busy at the loom on the front part of the house, or under the house, her young man may be seen standing chatting with her. It is in the evening, however, that she really gets herself up to attract. She may be seen seated on the floor with a little mirror before her doing up her hair and putting on her face the paste or powder which the girls affect. She is ready then to receive her admirer, who is preceded by a friend, usually not more than a boy, who comes to see that the way is clear. There is no walking out and there is no secret meeting. They are supposed to be under a certain amount of surveillance all the time.

Marriage amongst the Talaings is, on the whole, a very simple affair. The essence of it is simply that the parties have an understanding and go to live together. After the parties have made up their own minds, the chief requisite is that the young woman's parents be brought to look on the arrangement with favour. To this end, when the courting has sufficiently advanced, the young man gets his friends to approach the girl's parents. If everything is amicably settled, the time is fixed. The marriage usually takes place at the house of the bride's parents or those taking that place. The bridegroom's friends gather round him on the occasion and march with him in procession to the bride's house. Sometimes, instead of going straight there, a *detour* is made through the streets to give the affair more publicity. The effects of the bridegroom in the shape of trunk, mattress, pillows, etc., are carried along in the procession. The friends of the bride gather at the bride's house and there preparation is made for feasting. There they wait until the approach of the bridegroom is announced. The presents given by the friends on the occasion are set out in two rows, and when all is ready, two men take their places at the two ends of the rows, one of them representing the bride and the other the bridegroom. These require to be men of some

nimbleness of wit, as a good deal of pleasant banter goes on between them and the one has to be ready to make suitable reply to the sallies of the other. The man for the bride begins by asking the other how all this has come about, and in reply the story is told of the young man being first struck by the beauty and graces of the girl and how, in the subsequent coming and going, his admiration had deepened and how eventually he had appealed to his friends to approach her parents and ask for the hand of their daughter. Some more or less smart things are said during the trial of wit between the two champions; for each is set on saying the best he can for his side, and the other guests sit round to listen and enjoy. It is usual after that to call for the parties to come forward, when an interesting ceremony sometimes takes place. If the bride is somewhat shy some one will perhaps suggest that there is no need to call them out; but the matter may often be decided by some one, whose position in the community is recognized, saying, "Let it be done according to custom." The bride will then be led forth by her supporters from her retreat behind a curtain and the two parties made to formally join hands. At times this finishes the ceremony. Sometimes, however, the parties are made to kneel Eastern fashion before the person representing authority. This person takes up sprigs of leaves and passes them to the bride and bridegroom who hold them up between the palms joined in the ordinary way of worship or respect, and so take upon them the vows of matrimony. Monks are sometimes present, but there is no religious ceremony.

The above may be regarded as the regular form of marriage. There is in addition a more irregular form to which the young folks often resort.

The marriage above described means the expenditure of money, and some are too poor to arrive at the matrimonial state but by the cheapest way. I have heard it said by one who had abundant opportunity for observing, that the custom of throwing stones at the house on the nuptial night and so exacting a kind of blackmail was the reason for the prevalence of the more irregular and quieter marriages. It

may be remarked here that this stone-throwing custom has evidently been borrowed from the Burmese. It is universal now in Talaing villages in Burma, but there is no trace of it in Siam. In this quieter kind of marriage, the young man simply goes to the girl's house carrying a small present or offering to the parents or guardians. His being received into the house as a regular inmate constitutes marriage. Indeed the simple fact that a man and woman commence to live together constitutes marriage.

There is another way in which marriage is effected which might be called elopement and it is pretty common too. This takes place either when the young people are in too big a hurry or when there is opposition from the girl's friends. The girl leaves her father's house in company with the young man of her choice, who takes her to his friends usually. The friends take the runaway couple back and speak for them. Usually the girl's parents are persuaded to receive them into the house and in this way again marriage is consummated.

Ill assorted unions here, as elsewhere, take place and the quarrelsome couple often resort to the village elder, paying his fee and receiving his judgment. In many cases, even after a kind of divorce or separation has been granted, the couple quietly go back and live together as if nothing had happened. In some cases the separation is permanent and a new marriage is contracted. Often in such a case a second marriage proves for life. In other cases there is separation after separation until a man will occasionally be met with who has settled down to married life after five or six separations. A widower can marry his deceased wife's sister; in fact, if his father-in-law still has an unmarried daughter, it is expected of him. It is not considered best for a man to be alone and a widower is expected to marry again.

Marriage with near relations is not encouraged, it being considered best to marry outside the family relationship. Cousins are not given in marriage or were not in former times. The young people, however, sometimes steal a march on their elders and the matter is taken out of their hands by an elopement.

## DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD.

As far as the customs relating to birth and marriage are concerned, I have been unable so far to see much in the literature to guide. In the matter of treatment and disposal of the dead it is different. There is a book entitled *Lokasamutti* which has the disposal of the dead for its theme. In Talaing villages in Siam its rulings are said to be strictly followed. Whether this is true of Burma or not I do not know, but at any rate a great many of the customs are observed. It will perhaps be best here to give a short account of the general practice and also make some reference to the procedure to be followed in special cases.

A funeral is made the occasion of more feasting almost than any other event, and more money is usually spent then than at any other time. When a goodly sum has been spent there is always a good deal of pride taken in naming the amount. As soon as the news of a death gets abroad, people begin to go to the house of mourning. It is easy to tell when a death has taken place, first by the wailing of the women, then by the preparations being made for the funeral, and last of all by the music which is heard far and wide. The wailing of the women of the house begins as soon as the death takes place, then the women neighbours as they come in, especially if they happen to be relatives, prostrate themselves and break into what seems incontrollable grief. They soon however sit up and assume their usual attitude. It seems to be considered right for the women to wail. The preparations for the funeral take place in the street and a *mandap*, or awning, is usually erected. This shelters both the workers and the musicians.

It is not considered right for visitors to the house of mourning to go empty-handed. A small contribution is usually made which is regulated by the nearness or remoteness of relationship. A record of contributions is kept. But the family, if at all able, spends a good deal of money on its own account. A kind of 'open house' is kept for seven days and people gather in each evening and are regaled with light refreshments in the shape of tea and cake or pudding.

On the seventh day there is a big breakfast and presents are often distributed amongst the guests. Seven vessels of food are also presented to the monks.

Assistance is freely given by friends and neighbours. In making the coffin, although the work is often done by regular carpenters, no hire is taken for such services. There is no custom they say. The material only has to be bought. The participation and co-operation of others is restricted and sometimes entirely forbidden in certain cases of unfortunate deaths as will be seen later. Even the presentation of food to the monks is restricted or forbidden.

Music is considered quite a requisite at a funeral. People are considered very poorly off if they cannot have a band. In fact people will sometimes involve themselves in debt rather than do without that and other things considered necessary. As I have before remarked it is sometimes difficult to decide whether a custom is actually Talaing originally or has been borrowed from the Burmese later. In the use of music at funerals we are not left in much doubt, for we have the testimony of Father Sangermano that the use of music at funerals was more general amongst the Peguans than amongst the Burmese. They have a particular kind of music at funerals that can be recognized by those who know. A Talaing on hearing music in the distance can always tell you whether it is in connection with a funeral or not.

The usual mode of disposing of the dead is by cremation. In ordinary cases the coffin having the cover removed is upturned on a pile of wood which is then set on fire. There is always, in normal cases, a religious ceremony performed at the cemetery whether it be burial or cremation. The coffin which has been brought forth on a specially made pyramidal construction of thin board, adorned with coloured paper, borne on the shoulders of men, or on a car made of two carts with the shafts fastened together, is taken off and turned round several times and the end of the coffin knocked on something several times. The ruling of the book is that the coffin be wheeled round six times and knocked at the end, where the feet are, seven times. In both cases it is

often three times, and the dakṣina is also sometimes made. The dakṣina consists in making the circle of the pile or grave three times, beginning on the right hand and following round, or in a direction contrary to the hands of a clock.

The coffin is then placed in front of the priest who is to perform the ceremony. Other priests in attendance sit behind the officiating priest, and the people kneel in reverential attitude in front. The service principally consists in a repeating of the formulas of belief and the five precepts, which the people repeat after the priest, and a little homily is usually given. Before the service begins, a white cloth is drawn out of the coffin and the end of it placed in the hands of the priest. A cocoanut is broken and the water poured out at the head of the coffin.

The funeral procession is led by a number of women, the number varying according to the condition of the people concerned, bearing trays containing requisites for the funeral and presents for the priests. Thus are carried the torches for lighting the pile; the betel-nut and betel-leaf, etc., for the use of the people. What remains is all taken to the monasteries. Things once used in connection with a funeral are not taken back home, but may be taken to the monasteries for the use of the monks. Thus a good teak bedstead is sometimes used on the funeral car to support the coffin. That is simply left at the cemetery with the other materials composing the structure. These bedsteads are however taken to the monasteries. Good pieces of bamboo once used at a funeral are sometimes hacked and cut up to prevent any one from carrying them back. Many of these customs are the consequence of a fear lest by any means the departed spirit should get back home, which is evidently not desirable. On returning from the cemetery, apparently on joining the confines of the town or village, the road is scratched with a digger or hoe and the departed is addressed in some such words as these: "I have nothing to do with you now. Our connection is quite severed. Do not come near us again." And yet the dead are not forgotten at all. It seems all to have arisen out of the belief that the spirits

of the dead haunt the abodes of the living and not always for their good.

The obsequies are much curtailed in certain cases which are regarded as unfortunate deaths. Thus in the case of a woman dying on childbed, the body must not be kept over night, and if death takes place at night, it means immediate burial. Here is an instance of the way in which the rule is sometimes interpreted. A woman got over her confinement all right evidently, but before she could be about again took ill and after a time died. This being a case of unfortunate death it was ruled that she be buried at once. The death, however, took place in the night and during heavy rain. So it was arranged that those making the coffin should time their work in order that it would not be finished until daylight. A board was sawn now and another again after a bit; a nail was driven now and another again, thus keeping the work going till the morning dawned. It was not evidently thought that any evil would result from keeping the dead, but just that the tradition might be kept up by a fulfilment of the letter.

In this connection there is a curious custom referred to in the *Lokasamutti*. After mentioning cases of post-mortem birth and the tacit admission that the foetus is the property of the woman and ought to remain with her even after her death, the following occurs:—"It is right either to open the womb or to cremate with the foetus in case of a pregnant woman dying at full time. In case there is fear after taking away the child, let the husband walk before the funeral *cortège*, carrying a sword over his shoulder. Arrived at the cemetery let him put up a barrier of thorns on that side which is toward the town or village. When cremation is taking place, let the husband say (addressing the departed wife in suitable terms): 'Take all your garments with you and return no more home to your place in the village. Do not frighten us. Your babe has gone with you. Do not come and ask for your clothing. You have taken all with you.' Having said this, let the husband take a nail and strike it into the door according to the custom of old." There is no mention here of any substitute in case the child



has been taken away, but in another place it is to be represented by a short length of plantain stalk placed in the coffin alongside the corpse.

Something of this kind is still practised in such rare cases, only nowadays the weapon preferred is a gun and it must be fired on going forth to the cemetery. The observance of the rule seems to give the greatest satisfaction.

Persons dying of contagious diseases are carried forth at once and buried. In fact they are sometimes not allowed to die in the house, but are carried out to die at the cemetery, or on the way to it. There are of course cases where the sufferers have recovered and cases too where people have been carried out for dead and found to be still living. There is a rule in the book quoted above for such cases. It reads, "Should one die and being bound hand and foot reach the cemetery and then show signs of life, he must not be taken back to the village. It is fitting to build a shelter hut outside the village and lay him there. Should this rule be neglected there will be much loss and sickness and yakkhas, bhutas, and pretas will be rampant. There will be loss to seven generations, short life and death." This rule is consistently observed. Cases showing life at the cemetery are not allowed to return until complete restoration is assured.

Persons dying of malignant tumours are also regarded as unfortunate. In such cases cremation is not allowed and there must be no feast, only a quiet recognition at the monastery being permitted. Here is another reminder that Buddhism is to the Talaings their salvation. They find their consolation in their religion. It is manifest all through, that the religious are above all this fear of the unseen world.

The funeral feast is sometimes postponed to a more convenient season, as, for instance, in cases of contagious disease, where the funeral is hurried and there is no desire to go near the house of mourning. The feast is then carried out in the usual way. The friends and neighbours are busy the day and the night before. The day before a feast is called *nai klon huit*, 'the day of exertion.' The feast takes place in the morning. Guests are accommodated in the neighbouring houses when the house of mourning proves

insufficient. The monks are there to preach the truth and are accommodated in the inner room or upper room, the front of which is left open. Usually the preaching consists in the recitation of something from one of the suttas. The people kneel in reverential attitude with little paper flags held between the palms of the uplifted hands.

The great funerals among the Talaings are those of members of the religious order, especially when they are of some standing, as the superior of the monastery, or the leader of the *guno* or sect. In such cases no expense is spared and, in order to have time to collect the funds and make the necessary preparations, the remains are preserved and coffined and kept lying in state for months, sometimes for a year. The funerals of monks usually take place in the hot season when the people are more at leisure than at any other time. When the time comes there is high festival with music and much apparent rejoicing. There are exhibitions of jugglery by day and theatricals by night and the monastery grounds assume the appearance of a fair. In Burma it is called *jah jwa sañ*, 'dragging a corpse of the assembly.' The allusion is to the dragging about of the funeral car, great ropes being attached at each end and the people taking sides in a tug-of-war. In Siam the Talaings simply called it *pöa jwa sañ*, 'festival of a corpse of the order,' there being no dragging in this case. In Burma the funeral pile is lighted by means of tapers and torches, everybody who can taking a hand in it. In Siam the pile is lighted by means of fireworks from a distance. Rockets are made to run along lines of wire or hide rope and shot into the pile of combustibles consisting of candles, tapers, perfumed wood and herbs, the offerings of the people, together with the regular fuel. It would seem to be a Talaing custom, since it is not in vogue with the Siamese.

#### RULINGS OF THE LOKASAMUTTI.

A few examples of the rulings of the Lokasamutti may now be given: "Should one be struck by lightning

and die, by putting the body in a pig's trough you can bathe it. Measuring the length of the body dig a hole with the face to the north-east. When you bury let four finger breadths of the forehead appear above the hole.\* Opening out the hair let a lay brother harrow over the head with a harrow having seven teeth. At the same time let him repeat, 'Let the rains be good, let the streams be pure,' and let him harrow seven times. If you cannot get a lay brother, a relative or follower must harrow. If you do not do this the relatives will be harassed for seven generations and their lives shortened. The parents will not be free from sin. You cannot present cooked food to the monks. You cannot receive help. You can offer uncooked food. If death takes place instantly you must bury at the place. Should the person struck live to reach home and die there you may bury in the cemetery."

"In case of suicide by hanging it is not good to bathe the body. Presents of food and money cannot be received. Cords at hands and feet must not be tied. You cannot present food to the monks, nor can you observe the sila.

"Should the hanging not be quite accomplished the rope may be cut. At the time of cutting let the parents and relatives remain at a distance of two stones' throw. When the body falls the parents, relatives and followers may come near. It is fitting to give the knife used to the person who cuts the rope that it may be his. As to the person who cuts the rope it is right for the parents to get an old lay brother to do it. The rope must be cut in three cuts. When burying you must measure the body and then dig the grave. As in the case of one struck by lightning you must bury the corpse standing. Set the face to the north-east. Unloose the top knot and let there be four finger breadths above the ground and harrow, etc., as in case above."

"As to a person killed by a tiger. You must not bathe the corpse. It is not good to accept presents (of food and money). It is not good to present food to the monks."

"In case of death by drowning it is not good to take presents, or to read the meditations. You can tie the feet

\* The corpse is to be buried in a standing position.

and hands. You can keep the sila. In such a death after seven days or at the change of moon you can present food to the monks. Before such times it may not be done."

There are several rules as to priority when two deaths take place in the same house or village on the same day. "Should a person die and it be decided to burn the body, even if the funeral pile has been got ready, if another person die in the same house or the same village, the first death must be left in the house until the other is disposed of. But the body of him who dies later must not be burned with the fuel gathered for the first. The second body may be burned in the same place, but the fires of the first must be burned out."

Again: "In a village where a death takes place and the body is being carried out for burial, should another death take place before reaching the confines of the village, the funeral must stop there for the night. The second death must be buried first. Should, however, the funeral procession have reached the confines and be free of the village, the first death may be buried first. If not yet outside the village boundaries, it is not right to carry back home. It must not be done. It is fitting to wait where it stands. Non-observance of this rule will result in loss, calamity and sickness to the community."

Still another: "When two die in one house the latter must be taken first. If not observed those who remain behind, parents, relatives and dependents, will be short lived and suffer loss."

And again: "When two deaths occur in a village on the same day, the last must be carried out first. When the body of the last has been placed on the pyre the other may be carried out. If it is desired to cremate side by side a free place in the cemetery may be chosen. In case of the two deaths taking place at the same time, enquiry must be made and the case which has been ill longest should be taken first."

With regard to the contribution toward helping with the expenses it is ruled: "On a death taking place in any village and a contribution collected, should another death

follow no contribution may be taken. The community has already done its part. The contribution cannot be asked back or returned. It may only be used in making merit. So when a contribution has been made at the house, no contribution may be asked for after burial. It is not good."

There are several rules with regard to strangers. "In case of a person dying in another than his own village, it is fitting that his parents and relatives should be there before life is extinct to seek out the necessary offerings and the wood and bamboo. It is fitting that they should have everything ready to carry forth the corpse when life is extinct."

"Should a stranger die in your house do not put him out. Do not lay the body in the middle of the house nor on the verandah. When carrying it down on the west take away the usual stair and make a new one. Those who come with help must go up the new stair. You must not use leaves from the eaves. Tiger grass from the jungle must be used. (This refers to the tying of the corpse in three places.) If death takes place in the evening the body must not be kept over night."

A son even after leaving his parents' house is a kind of stranger. "If a son leaves his parents' house and goes to another house to live and again returns and dies in his parents' house, do not take the coffin up into the house. If, however, the relatives agree, it can be done."

Similarly with other relations. "Deaths taking place in the house of a brother or sister, the body may be taken down by the door and steps. Do not take the coffin up into the house. Only when permission is given may the coffin be carried up. So in the case of cousins, nephews, nieces, grandchildren and great-grandchildren."

The various acts of the funeral customs must be carried out with precision and no wavering. Thus: "After bathing the corpse it is not allowable to set it down and say, 'This is not a proper place yet.' A new place may not be prepared for it. Otherwise there will be misery and loss to the family for seven generations."

Again it is ruled that presents of clothing, money or food must not be shifted from one place to another, but must be put in the proper place once and for all.

Deaths taking place at the end of month or end of year have certain disqualifications. "A person dying on one of the three days of the new year festival or on the last day of the moon, it is not good to keep the body over night. The owner of the house will be guilty of the four sins. Relatives and friends will have much calamity and short life. For seven generations there will be loss and misery. On the day of death carry forth the corpse. On the morrow receive the presents of friends. The following day you cannot do so. Offer uncooked food the same day. Extinguish fires effectually. Should you present cooked food to the monks, or should the funeral fire not be put out, or should you take presents from relatives that day, you can neither be called virtuous nor poor. You will be subject to all the miseries."

It will be seen that disabilities attach to deaths taking place away from home whether by accident or in the ordinary course of things. Here is another case: "If a person falls from a tree and dies at the place, one who is in the place of parents or relative or follower must step three times. Failing that, call an aged lay brother and let him step three times. If the person does not die there but dies after reaching home, let him be laid on the verandah under a roof. The three steps must also be made. This custom must not be set aside. You can present food to the monks, etc." "Should that be done which is not allowed, the family for seven generations will be harassed. Death, misery and loss will ensue."

In all cases of accidents taking place away from home these practices are carried out whether death is likely to follow or not. This is true of Talaing villages both in Burma and in Siam.

NOTE.—Mr. P. Clark of Phrapatom, Siam, who lived for some years amongst the Mons of the Meklawng basin, knowing their language and coming in daily contact with the people, has told me of two instances, in his knowledge, in which the tree from which a person had fallen and been killed was cut down immediately. In the one case it was a mango tree and the other a palmyra palm. He was informed at the

time that this was the practice in such cases and that it was because of the kalok. It was later explained to him that the fear was that the spirit of the dead man would enter the tree, if left standing, and would become a menace to the neighbourhood. A Mon friend hazards the opinion that the tree was cut down, because its guardian spirit had thus proved of a cruel disposition, and the removing of the necessary shelter would take away the evil influence from the people's midst. A great many of the customs are traceable to a desire to be on good terms with the unseen beings, or to avert their ill designs. I have not heard of any instance of this in Burma, and the need for it is not indicated in the Lokasamutti where one would expect information on such matters. It does not appear to be a Siamese custom.

#### TIMES AND SEASONS.

It is always considered important to begin things at the proper time. When a boy is going to school for the first time, his parents want to know what day it will be best for him to enter. If a person is setting out on a journey, he must find the proper day for starting in the direction he wishes to go. One will occasionally see people starting on a long journey so late in the day that it seems almost nonsense to begin, but it just happens that it is the proper day for starting in that particular direction and the start must be made, even if the traveller is only able to proceed a little way. These rules have to be relaxed and even set aside altogether when the steamboat and train and modern school with their own rigorous rules come into the lives of the people, though they are still observed in isolated districts. The Lokasiddhi, which is often kept by for guidance in all the various operations of village life, gives a list of days for the various agricultural operations which may be given here. It only needs that a beginning be made on the day indicated. Plough on Sunday. Put the seed to steep on Friday. This refers to the sprouting of the seed before sowing on the water. Sow on Monday. Reap on Wednesday. On Tuesday thresh the grain. Saturday winnow. Thursday bring into the granary. Once the granary is filled up, it must remain undisturbed for seven days. Even should one to whom paddy is due go and demand it he would have to wait till the seven days were

completed. And then too, according to the rule, it is only on Sunday that paddy may be taken out or put in. It is added that if you thresh on Sunday both paddy and house will burn.

The days for buying different things are also given. Sunday buy property. Monday buy clothing. On Tuesday buy land. Redeem slaves on Wednesday. There was a mild form of slavery in former times. Buy gems on Thursday. Curiously enough you must not give away gems on that day. On Friday buy gold and buy cattle on Saturday.

For the operation of cutting the hair, alluding to a former Talaing practice, before the Burmese custom of wearing the hair long was introduced, Monday and Wednesday must be eliminated and then it can be done on any of the other five days of the week. In cutting the nails, Saturday, Sunday and Tuesday must be avoided. There will be great honour in doing it on the remaining four days. For anointing the rule is similar.

In the matter of study, a pupil will only have moderate results from his learning on Friday and Sunday. On Thursday, however, there will be excellent intellectual profit. Study on Monday, Tuesday, Saturday, and Wednesday will bring trouble and there will be immediate forgetfulness. Again, if he learns arithmetic on the eighth day of either fortnight of the moon, he will have misery; if on the fourteenth day, the pupil will bear the penalty; but if on the tenth, both teacher and pupil will suffer calamity. If such study is carried on on the sila day of the full moon, the penalty will be on the parents. Besides such concrete examples there are rules by which the skilful can find the propitious or unpropitious days for any event.

#### WORLDLY LORE.

The Lokasiddhi gives a number of Talaing sayings which indicate what is thought fit in general behaviour. They are given in verse as is the whole work, and much of the pithiness of the original will be lost in translation.\*

\* Since writing this chapter I have seen in one of the smaller Jatakas, *Kon Gacim Pi*, some of these sayings given as *lokavattku*.



"When cooking the rice do not lay the spoon across the pot. After eating rice put back what remains. If you stick betel in your waist cloth and then chew it you will have little wealth. It is not fitting to wash the feet with water from the drinking water pot. Do not put back the water left from washing the feet. Do not mix men's and women's garments. Having fastened the turban do not afterwards let it become tangled. It is not fitting to use a turban as a belt. Do not step over a rope or walk under a yoke. Do not eat after women. If you take a chew from a woman, you will have little wealth. [An older person with bad teeth sometimes takes a quid of betel from a younger person, or a sick person from one who is well.] Do not lie on a woman's lap. It is fitting to spread a cloth and then lie down . . . . Do not let the drinking water pot go dry. If you do not cut long tangled hair, you will have little wealth. It is not right to deceive. If you lie down without washing the feet, you will have much misery. If you disparage others, your goods will decrease and leave you. *Japuh jaba* (certain flowers) are an adornment. If you lie with your head to the north you will have weariness. If you rinse the mouth and lave the face you will live to a good age. [This refers to an almost universal custom with orientals on rising from sleep.] If you have search made for lice whilst pounding rice or cooking, you will have much misery, says the wise man. You, who in this world would be free from misery, shun every unworthy action."

A few examples from *Snai Lhim*, the Book of a Thousand Omens, will give some of the lore of another kind common amongst the people. There is a very general belief in signs and dreams. Some of the examples will show a certain amount of keenness of observation rather than a mere arbitrary belief in special wonders and signs. I merely select one or two items as they have struck me in reading the book. "If a woman gives birth to a python or cobra the city will flourish for ever." What would give rise to a saying of this kind one does not know, but it reminds one of an incident recorded in the books in connection with the building of Warero's capital at Martaban. When the

memorial post at the palace was being set up, a woman in the eighth month of pregnancy came and looked into the hole and was pushed in, according to one account, or fell in according to another, and eight snakes sprang from her womb. Seven of the snakes died there, whilst the eighth went westward and died. This was to indicate, the wise men said, that seven kings of the dynasty would reign in Martaban, but that the eighth would move westward to another capital (Pegu). No doubt the saying and the story go back to a common origin.

"If sugarcane bears fruit, the place will be desolate; if the banyan bloom, the place will go to ruin." This is an allusion to the fact that the sugarcane bears no fruit and the banyan never shows any blossom. When a Talaing maiden wishes to emphasize her aversion to the advances of an admiring swain, she tells him to come to her when the sugarcane bears fruit and the banyan is in blossom.

"If rākshasas appear in a city, its people will be scattered and the city destroyed." This no doubt goes back to the time when civilized communities of more or less Indian origin lived in the coast cities surrounded by the wilder original inhabitants of the country. The appearance of these latter in the city would be a menace to its prosperity.

"If a turtle lays eggs in a house, the owner of the house will be in easy circumstances." Similarly, "if a python enters a house the owner will be well off."

How much of actual observation of the forces of nature is included in the following I do not know. "If it thunders in the east there will be a flood. It indicates that people will have sickness—that the paddy will be spoiled. If in the south-east, many trees will die. If in the south, there will be much rain. If it thunders in the south-west there will be war. If in the west, it indicates thrusting and hacking. If it thunders in the north-west, the community will be happy. If in the north, it indicates flood; there will be corn in the ear. If it thunders in the north-east, the grain will be vigorous and there will be thrusting and hacking of each other."

"If you dream of riding a turtle, your slaves and cattle will run away."

“If you dream of a funeral in the house, the owner will die. Propitiate the planets, destroy the house and do not stay in the place and you will be free from offence.”

There is a way, however, by which one may be free from untoward dreams. There are two devatas who have the control of dreams. Their names are Akāraka and Asota. To them prayer should be made in this manner: “Let the bad dreams come to nothing, and let me have good dreams.” Thus praying to these devas advantage will come speedily.

## SECTION IV.—RELIGION.

### BUDDHISM.

FROM a consideration of their general practices, it is evident that, whilst Buddhism is the acknowledged religion of the Talaings in general, there is a great deal in their beliefs that is to be traced to an earlier origin. Like many of their less civilized neighbours of the present day, their forebears were originally animists believing in a world of spirits, influencing them for evil for the most part, and only kept from open hostility by a strict recognition of what was regarded as their rights. Buddhism, when it came, seems to have tolerated a great deal of this, at least to the extent of allowing the people to keep their beliefs in the unseen world, so long as they did not interfere with the keeping of the precepts and the more public observances of Buddhism. No doubt this would be recognised as more or less the case with all religions. What we are pleased to denominate superstitions die hard. This mixing of the recognised religion with the traditions of the past is perhaps more in evidence in Indo-China than in Western countries. So much is this the case that observers in Burma have not hesitated to say that Buddhism is but the outer covering which when lifted exposes to view the deep-seated animistic beliefs and practices of the people.

This however is not intended to convey the impression that Buddhism has not effected great and abiding changes on the character of its devotees. Phayre, in his *History of Burma*, speaks of "the softening influences of Buddhism," and it is perhaps almost impossible to realise what that influence has saved them from. It is evident from indications in the books that cannibalism with its accompanying horrors was amongst the practices suppressed by the preaching of Buddhism.

The reverence of the Talaings for the Buddha, his teaching and the members of the monastic order is very real. To them Buddha is the exalted Lord, their God, and his word, as they understand it, is truth. No one can come in contact with them and discuss the varieties of their faith without being impressed with this. One has to distinguish between thoughtful people who know their religion and those who have not yet been initiated into the deeper things of the faith. Intelligent men and women are satisfied as to the efficiency of Buddhism to explain the mysteries of life. The law of Karma and the principle underlying the common thought of reincarnation give very general satisfaction.

The religion of the Talaings generally is that form of Buddhism known as Southern, that is, the Buddhism of Ceylon, Burma, and Siam. There is evidence from the literature and from the language that there was a very close connection with Northern India in early times, and there is little doubt that they first received their religion from that source. Later there seems to have been a good deal of intercourse with Southern India. But latterly the island of Ceylon has been looked to as the source of the pure form of Buddhism. So much is this the case that in mere personal everyday contact with the people one gets the impression that their religion as well as the Indian influence has come through Pali and Southern Buddhism. As will be seen, however, a look into their language and literature shows that some of the commonest religious and other terms have come to them through the Sanskrit and other northern influence.

Buddhism gets its name from Gotama, the Buddha who flourished in the sixth century before Christ. He made a great impression on the India of his time and his teaching has been widely spread over Eastern Asia. The number of Buddhists in the world is often put at 500,000,000, but this number would include a very large number who are not Buddhists at all. Figures relating to the religions of the world in which Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, etc., are recognised as separate faiths give a much lower

estimate. To the Talaings, however, it is the religion of the mass of mankind, their ideas of the great world being often somewhat limited.

#### THE STORY OF THE BUDDHA.

The work *Pathama Bodhi* found in both prose and verse, the latter in somewhat abridged form, gives a striking account of the birth and life of Gotama and his attainment of the Buddhahood. He was born at Kapilavastu in B.C. 543. His father Suddhodana is represented as a mighty king. At the birth of his son Siddhartha, from the portents seen, it was foretold by the wise men that he would either become an universal monarch or would attain to the Buddhahood. It must be remembered that to the Talaings Gotama is one of many Buddhas. He is the fourth of the present kalpa or cycle, and there is still one to come, Ariya Metteya. Prince Siddhartha was therefore very carefully brought up. His father sought to have him trained for the duties of a great ruler, and as he had no desire that his son should become a Buddha, he was careful to keep him away from all knowledge of the miseries of the world. He was surrounded with every comfort. His father built for him three palaces, one suitable to each of the three seasons, the cold, the hot, and the rainy seasons. He would not, however, be secluded altogether, and from time to time he prevailed on his charioteer to take him outside the palace walls to see the life of the city. It was then that he saw the four sights which determined his future course and influenced his after-life. On one occasion he saw an aged person tottering along and was informed on enquiry that this was old age and that all were subject to it. At another time he saw a sick person and, never having seen one before, made enquiries and found that it was a very common sight. Again a funeral procession was met and another aspect of universal misery was brought before him. When he would go abroad, his father took all precautions that everything that was unsightly should be

put away from his view and the city looking its best, but all was of no avail. On the fourth occasion it was a mendicant monk that he saw, and the sight of one who lived apart from the world and despised its follies appealed to him. He would not be content now till he had given up his position as the son of a ruler and the heir to his throne.

This is known as the Great Renunciation and is typified to this day in part of the ceremony which takes place when the young men give up family life to don the yellow robe and undergo the discipline of monastic life either temporarily or permanently. Prince Siddhartha, or the Bodhisat as he is styled in the Talaing books, had by this time married the beautiful Yasodharā and a son had been born to them. This made the giving up of family life all the harder. The farewell scene is very well depicted. He rose in the night and, calling his young man Channo, directed him to get his favourite horse ready for the flight. Before going, he went and had a last look at his sleeping wife and child. He would fain have taken his son in his arms for a last embrace, but, deciding that it would be better not to do so, he gave one last look and went away. The story tells how, having mounted his steed, he rode forth accompanied by his faithful attendant. Before leaving the city, he was met by Mara, the tempter, who tried to dissuade him from his purpose, but without avail. The gates were miraculously opened and a halt was only made when they reached the borders of the forest. Here the prince sent his attendant back with his horse and trappings. Having cut his hair and made a vow, he became a mendicant monk and lived a rigid ascetic life for six years. So great were his austerities that he had almost fallen a martyr to his own severities. Fortunately he was roused in time to a sense of the need to prolong life if he was to serve mankind. Subsequently under the Bo-tree (*Ficus Religiosa*), called by the Talaings the Bodhi Banyan, he attained enlightenment.

Henceforward he is spoken of as the exalted Lord, *i.e.*, the Buddha. Up till now he had been the Bodhisat, the Buddha to be. The story of his realisation of his mission

to the world and the way in which he was discovered under the Bo-tree and regaled with carefully prepared food by the woman who was thus his first devotee is very prettily told. It was here, too, that he was again assailed by the tempter Mara and a great host. The Talaing story tells how the daughters of Mara—Raga, Tanha, Irati—representing the passions, now thought they they could accomplish what their father failed to effect, but they had no better success. The Bodhisat had established his claim to be the Buddha.

His life was now devoted to the propagation of the truth as it had been borne in upon him in the struggle to overcome the evils of existence. He made many disciples, some of them in high life and among them his own father. In the fine season he travelled about preaching his doctrine, and in the rainy season he instructed those who were drawn to the monastic life. A Talaing monk always reckons the length of his monastic life, not by the number of years, but by the number of rainy seasons; Vassa, the rainy season, becomes a synonym with him for a year. It is during the rainy season, too, that the monastic rules are more strictly enforced. All must be inside the monastery before sunset and may only be away from their own monastery with permission under special circumstances. Instead of the usual two meals before midday, there is an endeavour to do with one only. Some monks confine themselves to one meal a day during the whole three months. Others are content if they can keep up the restriction for one month. In eating the meal, too, if certain things happen they must stop eating. If a crumb falls from the mouth the meal is over.

He met with opposition, however, his own cousin Devadatta being of the number. This name and the term *tīrthya*, applied to heretical sects and unorthodox believers of Gotama's time, are used to designate persons of another faith. In the history of Pegu, the heretical teachers of King Tissa's time are called *acā tī*, the latter a contraction for *tīrthya*, and the Portuguese Philip De Brito is said to have been of the company of *Devadat*.



Examples from the reputed discourses are given, and there is a circumstantial account of the *parinibbāna* or decease. This book in its various forms, judging from the copies to be found at some monasteries, is pretty well read. The monastery copies of this and other works are handed round the village for use on special occasions. Asking for a popular book at a Talaing monastery is like asking for the same thing at a public library. It is often out.

#### CLERGY AND LAITY.

The people religiously are divided into two classes, viz. *gamī* and *garah*, the first term denoting the religious, the inmates of the monasteries, and the other the dwellers in houses. The former are subject to monastic discipline and live quite apart from the ordinary life of the people. The latter live the ordinary family life, giving and being given in marriage and following the ordinary pursuits of life. The latter are also the supporters of the former and in that aspect are also termed *dakā*. A monk addresses persons outside the monastic order as *dakā*. A woman is *dakā ḥo'*. With respect to any particular monastery, a supporter is termed *dakā bhā*, from *dayaka* and *vihāra*, though this is often reserved for the actual builder or builders of a monastery.

#### THE THREE REFUGES.

A leading and essential feature of the teaching is the *saraṇagamaṇa pi*, in older books shortened to *suiv pi*, the three refuges, sometimes called the Buddhist Creed. It consists in repeating three times the formula by which one takes refuge in the Buddha, the doctrine, and the order. It is used on various ceremonial occasions, such as, for instance, at the ordination of monks and at the funeral service. It is in Pali and is always the same, whatever the language. *Buddham saraṇam gacchami*,

*dharmam saraṇam gacchami, saṅgham saraṇam gacchami,*  
 'I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the doctrine, I take refuge in the order.' The Talaings pronounce it according to the system of Talaing phonetics.

#### THE FIVE PRECEPTS.

The *sī msum*, pañcasīlam, or five precepts, is also well understood and frequently used. These are also repeated in Pali, but a translation into the vernacular is usually given. All Buddhists are obliged to observe them. They inculcate abstinence from the taking of life, from stealing, from adultery, from lying and from the use of spirituous liquor. They are understood to give direction to the whole life. It says much for the teaching that there is such a high estimate placed on the carrying into practice of these precepts. A Talaing when another religion is introduced to his notice will often ask what its precepts are as affecting the conduct. It indicates the value he attaches to the precepts of his own religion.

The first of these five precepts, that relating to the taking of life is perhaps somewhat of a stumbling block to the people in general. Some will confess inability to keep the precepts altogether, more with reference to this one than to any other. It is understood to forbid the taking of the life of the smallest creature. Elderly persons will often tell you that now they are able to keep the precepts but that of course in their younger days they were not free from blame with regard to the first. There is a Talaing village on the Menam, the inhabitants of which have the reputation of being free from blame with regard to the first precept. They do not themselves take life, do not catch fish, and if a creature intended for food comes into their hands still living they at once release it. It is not considered an infringement of the rule to be accessory to the fact to the extent of using for food creatures which others have deprived of life. This is a point on which Buddhists generally are at variance with the tenets of vegetarianism.

## THE SĪLA DAYS.

The keeping of the *uposatha* day is a recognised institution amongst the Talaings and is duly kept by the devout. It is called *t'hai sī*, the sila day, in allusion to the keeping of the eight silas. The expression used for observing the day is *mañ sī* to keep the sila. The emphasis is thus on the special keeping of the precepts and not on the day as a special day, and this is seen in the treatment of the day. Those who mean to keep the day leave their homes dressed in their best after an early breakfast and proceed to the monastery. There they undergo the ceremony called *dagūn sī*, that is, they ask and receive permission from the priest and take upon themselves the duty of keeping the sila. They then spend the day according to inclination. Some will be found in the rest-houses reading books or conversing, others in the monastery chatting with the monks or listening to their discourse; some will be found about the monastery grounds and some even wandering about the neighbouring gardens; but, wherever found, they are known to be keeping the day by their dress and by their holding the rosary in one hand. The essential thing is that they rigidly keep the precepts and keep away from their families and their business. They abstain from food all the time and sleep at the monastery that night. Next morning they go through the ceremony known as *tīt sī*, coming out of the sila, and return to their homes and families and the ordinary routine of life. In Burma I have not noticed that it makes any difference to those who are not keeping the day at the monastery. They seem to go about their duties just as usual. In Talaing villages in Siam, however, even those who do not go to the monastery refrain from going to work in the fields on that day; the reason given being that they commiserate the beasts and give them a rest. For other labour, which people perform for themselves, it seems to make little difference.

There are four sila days in a lunar month, the eighth of the waxing of the moon, the full moon, the eighth of

the waning and the last day of the moon. The full moon and the last day of the moon seem to be held more in estimation than the others. What are known as the eighth sila days are usually characterised by extreme quietness about the monasteries. The sila days are kept more particularly by the elder portion of the community, and those who are more or less retired from active business are the most constant in attendance to the duty. Some men do not manage it more than twice or thrice a year, and then only on the special occasions when every one almost is on holiday. Poverty is sometimes given as an excuse, a small offering being always taken to the monastery on the occasion.

The religious signification of the day is never lost sight of, no matter what other interests are on. At the end of what is usually termed Lent, when the canoe racing is the chief matter of conversation, the sila day must be always kept first of all. I remember being present in a monastery when the superior had just died. He had also been the leader of the sect and his successor was present. It happened to be the sila day and just the time when people were in the habit of coming to take the necessary vows. In the midst of all the hubbub and confusion caused by the event, the new leader put the question to those around, "Will you take the vows of the sila?" to which one man at once responded, "Of course we will."

#### RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS.

The chief religious festivals of the year are the full moon at the beginning of Lent, the full moon at the end, the annual pagoda festival and the new year festival may also be included. It is on such occasions that there is a full turnout of the people, men and women, old and young, in their gayest attire. There is a special making of cakes and other eatables on such occasions and the monasteries are well patronised and well supplied. It is a great time for

the boys, and even households, who have made no preparations of their own, may be well supplied from the surplus at the monastery. Crowds frequent the temples and monasteries, and in the evening the pagodas are lighted up with innumerable candles. It is the usual Burmese crowd that is seen to all appearance and it would be hard to find one with brighter colours anywhere. In Siam the Talaing crowd is, if anything, more sombre, but possesses characteristics all its own. There is a distinction between it and the ordinary Siamese crowd.

The solidifying element in the religion of the Talaings, as here described, it will be seen, is the monastic system. Buddhism without its religious order could never be the influence it is amongst the people. Next to this influence comes no doubt the pilgrimages to and worship at the shrines. The pagoda festivals no doubt add to the popularity of the faith. Some of these are only of local interest, but many of them have a wide celebrity. A pilgrimage to a famous shrine seems to count for much.

#### PILGRIMAGES.

The shrine above all shrines to the Talaings is *Kyāk Laguñ*, the famous Shwe Dagôn Pagoda at Rangoon. Dagôn it is evident is just the Burmese form of *Daguñ*, the common form of *Laguñ*, the name by which Rangoon is known to the Talaings to this day. This rather rules out Dr. Forchhammer's derivation of Dagôn from Trikumba, one of the old names for Rangoon.

Here is the story of the founding of this famous pagoda as told in the Talaing books. In the country of Laguñ in the city of Trikumba dwelt a worthy couple of some substance. To them were born two sons, to whom the names of Ta Pu and Ta Paw were given. In order that they might in some measure repay the kindness of father and mother, the two brothers determined to go on a trading voyage to Panduwa, where there was a severe famine, no rain having fallen for three years, and where they judged that by

judicious trading they could easily make a good profit. So a builder and carpenters were called and a fine three-masted ship built of one hundred cubits length. The ship was loaded with food-stuffs such as rice, honey, molasses and sugar. When the weather was favourable the anchor was weighed and the sails unfurled. After forty-two days' sailing they reached the city of Suvaññanagara. Here they unloaded their merchandise, but found they were still far from Panduwa, their original destination. Hiring carts and sleds they again loaded their merchandise and started out on their long journey. The first night they resolved to camp at a place where there was a spreading banyan tree. Now it so happened that the guardian angel of this tree had been the young men's mother in a former existence. Moved with compassion she asked them whither they were bound. Hearing of their destination and the object they had in going, she told them that the Buddha was about to appear and, if they would wait instead of pursuing their journey, they would gain what would be more to them than hundreds of thousands of profit. The merchandise of Nibban is the thing that is profitable. Not only so, they would have the opportunity of becoming the first followers of the Buddha. So they eagerly waited and in due course presented parched rice and honey-cakes to the Lord of light. Their offerings were received in fitting form and the new names of Phussa and Bandika given to the brothers. On their asking for a memorial, the Allwise passed his hand over his head and gave them eight hairs. After various adventures, the brothers reached Laguñ again and enshrined the hairs of the Buddha on the Singuttara hill. The original pagoda built over these memorials is said to have been seven cubits high, but with seven added casings it reached to a height of twenty cubits. Afterwards the people of the three cities of Syriam, Rangoon and Pegu added to its size and height until it attained to its present magnificence. So it was ordained that whosoever worships and presents offerings at these hair relics will be free from the four *apayas* and will reach the six heavens. All, as the season comes, must pursue their course to reach the Rangoon hair relics. The

devas also on every occasion go to serve the pagoda of the Buddha's relics continually. Whosoever reaches the Rangoon hair relic pagoda and worships there, with him will the devas, throughout the universe, be well pleased.

Whatever value the reader may put on this narrative, it is all a part of the religion of thousands of Talaings both in Burma and in Siam. To them it is very truth and it is more or less so to millions besides. To the outsider the pagoda festival has more the appearance of a great fair where feasting and jollification are the main features, but by the people themselves the original intention is never lost sight of. An act of worship is always performed and it is regarded as a very meritorious deed.

A very pleasing feature of these pilgrimages to the shrines in the Amherst district is the entertainment of the people as they return by the villagers on the way. I have seen the practice as carried out in connection with the yearly festival of the Lamaing pagoda in the southern part of the Amherst district. Going south, where the bulk of the pilgrims reach their homes the same day, they are met a few miles out of Ye, where numbers of the stay-at-homes have gone out in the forenoon with foods and drinks. Booths have been erected by the wayside, and there the people as they drop in on the way home are regaled with the refreshments provided. Going north again, where some have to spend a night on the way, the provision is if anything more solid. At most places the returning worshippers may sit down to a regular meal. In order to be able to cope with this unusual strain on the commissariat, the villagers have to be preparing for days before. There is always plenty of rice on hand, but that has to be milled and pounded and prepared ready for the pot. Parties of men are sent out into the jungle to forage for any vegetable foods available. These consist of leaves, flowers and fruits from the great forest trees as well as smaller plants. The pilgrims sit down in the village street as they arrive and partake of the food provided and then pass onward on their journey. It is all part of their religion and is expected to go to their credit for the future.

## LIFE IN THE MONASTERY.

The real religious, however, are the monks who spend their lives in the monasteries and are devoted to the practice of the precepts. As pointed out above the phrase *gami garaṇ*, equal to 'clergy and laity,' is used in speaking of the people generally when both members of the order and their supporters are included. The word *lakyāk* is the common designation of the monks. The superior of a monastery is called *lakyāk jnok* in common parlance. In the books the phrase *nwīn puīn*, 'having possession,' is used, and even in the common phrase the superior is said to own the monastery. In speaking of the other members of the brotherhood who have attained full orders, the superior calls them *nāi*, 'lord' or 'master.' *Lakyāk* is apparently connected with *kyāk*, 'god,' which is always given as the native representative of *Buddha*. Another word used in the books to designate monks in a general way is *ḥayaṇ*. In Siam it is used regularly in connection with the ceremony of ordination. Candidates for the monastic order are said to become *ḥayaṇ*, and the festival connected with the ceremony is termed *ḥa ḥayaṇ*. *Ḥayaṇ* is in fact given as the equivalent of the Pali *upāsampadā*, and *ḥa ḥayaṇ* therefore means to undergo the *upāsampadā* ordination.

When the vows are taken, the renunciation of the world is expected to be permanent, and in a great many cases it is so. In practice, however, a monk may leave the order when he feels the call of the family life again, and great numbers avail themselves of the opportunity, as may be seen from the terms used in addressing them or in speaking of them. An ex-monk has *nāi* or *kyāk* prefixed to his name, as *Nāi We*, *Kyāk Lān*. They are addressed as *mū kyāk*, *mū* being short for *amū*, 'uncle.' Those who have merely been in the monastery as novices are addressed *thapuiy* or *mū thapuiy*.

In Talaing villages in Burma practically every youth goes to the monastery as a novice or postulant for a time, usually one rainy season. There they wear the yellow robe and undergo monastic discipline. Not having taken the full



vows, however, they are allowed an occasional holiday. At certain full moon seasons they get a day or two off, when they again don the ordinary garb and return to their families. If not intended for the full vows they lay aside the yellow robe at the full moon of Waḥ at the end of the rains and return to their ordinary occupations.

During their stay in the monastery the novices further pursue the studies which they had begun when they attended as pupils in the monastery school. Going into a village monastery during lesson hours one may see both these yellow-robed youths and the little boys seated on the floor all busy with their various lessons. The little boys may be busy with the alphabet or the spelling book, whilst some of them may be learning to read. The novices are usually found seated on the floor with slates or little boards before them on which are written the lessons for the day. They sit and repeat the lesson over and over again. It does not seem to disturb them that their neighbours are often repeating aloud quite a different lesson. The superior sits by and watches his scholars and listens to their efforts. Those who have reached a further stage study their book in private and come out to the superior to recite at a suitable time. In all but the more important villages the monks are still the only schoolmasters and they thus exert a great influence.

The entering of these youths into the monastery is made quite a festive occasion. There is a feast of good things for the friends. The young men on their part are dressed up in what is intended to represent a kind of regal style. In Siam a kind of crown is even worn. It is all intended to set forth the great renunciation of Prince Siddhartha when he left Kapilavastu. A parade is made through the village streets. For entrance into the novitiate the youth requires to be possessed of the three articles of a monk's clothing, the *ticivaram* : the *saṇā*, the *sapuṇ* and the *sakuṇṇ*, and also the girdle. These he presents to the priest with the request that he be admitted to the monastery. He then undergoes a ceremony in which the robes are passed between him and the officiating priest and he repeats the

three refuges and the ten precepts and then is duly robed. He is now ready to settle down to life in the monastery and, having provided himself with an alms-bowl, he follows the monks on their usual round in the morning.

For the further *upasampadā* ordination, the candidate must have attained the age of twenty, and having been already raised to the novitiate he must be possessed of four more articles, the alms-bowl, the razor, the needle, and the strainer. These he takes with him and hands to the leader of the chapter of priests. During part of the ritual in which he is submitted to an examination as to fitness, the officiating priest hands them over to him. This ceremony must take place in a duly consecrated *sima*, or ordination hall. The candidate is now duly invested with the eight requisites and has satisfied the ordaining brethren of his fitness. Up to this stage any one may be present, but now he is enfolded by the brethren and all outsiders must leave the building. The reason given by some for this is that in the early days when men were frequently leaving their families to enter the priesthood the wives sometimes broke in at this stage and interrupted the procedure. At any rate the aspirant for the priesthood is shielded from all outside influence whilst he assumes the full responsibilities of the new position.

It is sometimes pointed out that the Buddhist monk is not bound to rebuke or censure, that he is not charged with the care of his people. Yet he is a recognised leader, he is their teacher and is respected as such. In Talaing villages he is called out on all occasions and seems always ready to the call. The superior of a monastery with monks and novices under his care is not bound to go out himself. He may delegate the duty to them when he thinks it best. The people go freely to the monastery to ask his advice, and the monks are usually very attentive and courteous to their visitors. These interviews always begin and end with three prostrations before the monk. They are often done in a very perfunctory way, the visitor looking round and even speaking to others in the midst of his prostrations. The monk himself is apparently little affected by it; he

greet the coming and dismisses the parting guest in a very human way indeed. In many cases the monk is the scholar of the village and many of them attain to a fair amount of learning in an ordinary way, though their scholarship is not usually very deep. They know Pali more or less and they have a general knowledge of their own language and literature in their more modern forms, but even there it is surprising how soon they get out of their depth.

It is a fairly common sight in a Talaing village to see the monks going the usual morning round with the alms-bowl, but it is rare to find one who subsists on what he gets on the daily round. It is usual for the young men whose families live in the village to have the food brought to them by their mothers or sisters. The superior is often supplied by the families of the village or quarter in turns. It is considered by some necessary to eat some portion of that which is received in the alms-bowl, but others seem to be indifferent. It does not seem usual for the superior to go the morning round. In Talaing villages in Siam where the round is often made by boat, one frequently sees a youth sitting calmly in the middle of a boat paddled by three or four boys, whilst older monks are paddling all by themselves. One wonders why this is so, and on enquiry learns that the youth is going the round in place of the superior. The term *piṇḍapāt* (*piṇḍapāta*), which according to Childers is applicable only to food placed in the bowl of a monk while on his rounds, is applied by the Talaings indifferently to food for monks whether placed in the bowl or carried to the monastery. The monk is said to *cau piṇḍapāt*, 'return (to the village) for the *piṇḍapāta*,' and the women *palon piṇḍapāt*, 'fetch *piṇḍapāta*.' When a monk eats he is said to *kuiw puin* and his meal is named *puin*, as *puin thai*, the meal just before noon. It is just possible that *puin* (*pān*) is short for *piṇḍapāta* (cf. *saranagamana* shortened to *suiw*).

#### CHRISTIANITY.

No description of this religion is intended but just a note to show how it has at different times appealed to



GOING THE ROUND FOR ALMS—FIFTY OPDAINED MONKS COVER THE VIMS TOWT  
WITH OVER GAUMINI



the Talaings. Like other races professing Buddhism, the Talaings are slow to adopt any change in religion. Still it is to be remarked that the Talaings are one of the races of Burma amongst which decided progress is being made by Christian Missions (see Part I, *Burma Census Report*, 1911, page 101). The number of Talaing Christians returned for the census 1911 was 1,911. Even in the old days of the Peguan empire many seem to have been affected by contact with Christianity. Anderson in his introduction to *English Intercourse with Siam*, page 34, quotes the voyager Linschoten, who was in Goa from 1583 to 1588, as saying, "The pictures of the Peguan is to be sèene by the figures of the Indians, among St. Thomas Christians." And in speaking of the accuracy of Linschoten's information Anderson says, "He speaks of deriving his information not only 'by the daily trafficking of the Portingalles out of India,' but also from the Peguans themselves, 'whereof many dwell in India, some of them being Christians.'" Phayre in his *History of Burma*, speaking of De Brito's endeavours to establish his power in Pegu in the beginning of the seventeenth century, says that he pressed Buddhists to become nominal Christians and adds, "For the Portuguese historian speaks of a hundred thousand converts to Christianity."

## SECTION V.—THE BELIEF IN THE UNSEEN.

### THE SPIRITS.

AMONGST the Talaings there is a general belief in the unseen which is not to be traced to Buddhism, but which as already indicated is to be referred back to the days before the religion of the Buddha had reached them. There is in the language a number of words denoting beings of the unseen world. Of these the most common is the word *kalok* which is used very often to designate spirits in general. In many ways it corresponds with the Burmese 'nat,' though it perhaps has not such a wide application.\* This is evidently a native word. *Rakuih*, sometimes *lahuih*, is the Sanskrit 'rākshasa' and is sometimes translated *kalok dāk*, 'water demon.' At times, too, *kalok* simply is used in the books in place of 'rākshasa.' *Rakuih* in the popular imagination is a wild monster which eats human flesh and has certain supernatural powers. It has long eyeteeth.

In the books the term apparently designates the wilder original inhabitants of a country, but even there the use of the term *kalok* shows that they are regarded as a kind of demons. The Talaing *rakāh* is the *bhīlū* of the Burmese. Other words used to designate spirits are *bhut* and *pruit*, the Indian 'bhuta' and 'preta'; but these are more book words than anything else and they are the spirits of dead men. They are understood to be malevolent when active, and everything must be avoided which would at all lead to their activity. To become a preta after death is popularly understood to be a punishment for evil deeds done in the body. Here, again, when it comes to contact

\* It is not used of inhabitants of the heavenly regions. *Dewatau* is the term then used.

with men, it is the word *kalok* that is used. The ghosts which appear to frighten people in the neighbourhood of graveyards and other lonely places are still called *kalok*.

Of another description are the *dewatan*, the inhabitants of the heavenly regions, who are ever ready to interfere for good at the right moment, that is, when one's karma warrants it. They, too, are the guardians of the trees who give comforting thoughts and fitting advice to those who seek their shelter. The guardians of the earth, the sky and the woods are appealed to as witnesses of one's action and, when an appeal is made or a vow taken, water is poured on the ground as an intimation to the kindly spirit who registers such things. When the rain fails to come in due time a rite is performed which is called going out to meet the rain. The people proceed to an open space in the fields where a kind of ceremonial is performed. Tapers are then lighted and carried to and placed at the base of any large trees in the neighbourhood. This appeal is evidently to these good spirits.

#### KALOK SNI, THE HOUSE SPIRIT.

The spirit of most importance to the Talaing is probably the house spirit, *kalok sni*. It is, of course, a very difficult matter to get anything like satisfactory information about the belief in spirits and the practices connected therewith. When you mention the subject to them, some will say the practice is so and so, but it is all nonsense. Others will profess not to know anything about it. An intelligent Siamese Talaing explained to me that many did not wish to speak of these things to strangers lest questions were asked which they could not answer satisfactorily, and further lest, when they could not explain, one should say to them: "Well, why do you believe in such things and why do you keep up the practices?" The only answer forthcoming to such questioning is usually: "Our fathers did these things and we simply follow." This friend said to me: "I tell you what I know about these things, little as



it is, because I see you are interested and want to know about them." Speaking about the house spirit he confessed that he did not know much about the origin of the belief, but he said that he had heard it explained in the following manner.

In the time of a certain king, the kalok used to appear at regular intervals and demand the body of a subject on each occasion. This went on for some time and the king became anxious and began to reflect that if this continued his kingdom would soon be depleted of people. So it happened, as he gave voice to these reflections, a courtier heard him and thought of a way out of the difficulty. He therefore spoke up and advised that a great feast should be prepared and the kalok invited to the feast. He urged that in this way it might be possible to make him the people's friend instead of their enemy. The king saw the wisdom of the suggestion and preparations were set on foot for a great feast. All kinds of foods and drinks that the people could think of were brought together and the kalok was invited to feast with them on his next appearance. The plan worked well, the kalok was pleased and became their friend at once, but it was soon apparent to everyone that there would be the old danger of the kalok reappearing and demanding his victim unless the feasts were continued for each appearance. So it was decided that on each appearance of the kalok another great feast should be made. All things went well and the kalok was now the friend of the people, because he was treated as a welcome guest. This, however, was rather an exacting service to keep up, as the appearances seem to have been rather frequent. A compact was therefore made with the kalok, for he had become so friendly now that it was possible to get him to listen to reason, and the frequency of the feasts was reduced until it became recognised as an annual or even triennial occurrence. We must, I suppose, presume that the kalok at the same time made it plain to his friends that, whilst he agreed to the reduction in the number of feasts, he must be duly honoured on the occasions and in the practices set forth in the tradition.

This story has a certain resemblance to one related in the Mahavamsa to this effect. The yakkha Rattakkhi made the people to have red eyes and then ate them. The king alarmed fasted and said he would not rise till the yakkha came. On the arrival of the latter, the king remonstrated and the yakkha wanted a district reserved for him to which he would confine operations. Then in the course of negotiations he agreed to the acceptance of one man as an offering and the king offered himself. This the yakkha refused to accept and it was finally agreed to make offerings at the entrance of every village. Thus the pestilence was stayed.

To guide us to an understanding of matters, we not only have the evidence that meets the eye in every Talaing village and the little bits of information which come out in friendly intercourse with the people, but we have in writing, scattered through various books for popular use, formulas for ceremonial and for diagnosis of sickness and fright in which the claims of the kalok are more or less exhibited. There is little reason to doubt that many of the observances in connection with house building and the form which different parts of the house are to take have something or other to do with the kalok.

The *kalok shi*, or house spirit, is quite an important personage in Talaing village life. The Talaings in Siam are just as assiduous in the observance of the traditions as their compatriots in Burma, if not even more so; and they always say that the tradition was brought over by their forefathers from their native land. Some even go the length of telling you to which district in Burma their house spirit belongs. It looks as if originally the kalok had marked a kind of tribal distinction, though nowadays it is more of a family affair. Here is a typical instance of the way in which it appears now and it may be seen in any village. You find a family in which there are three or four brothers, the various members of which have all married and are living in their own houses in different parts of the village. The eldest brother as being the nearest representative of the deceased father is recognised as the head of the family. In his house are kept the

requisites for the kalok. These consist of articles of clothing and adornment and are kept in a basket hung on the *dayuiñ kharoñ*, or spirit's post. This, in a house of the Talaing pattern, is the post at the south-east corner. All the brothers with their wives and children are said to be of one kalok, and when any need arises for using the kalok property or for examining as to the condition of the various articles members of the family must repair to the house of the head of the family. The kalok follows only the male line, and when the sisters marry each becomes attached to the kalok of her husband's family. The women are said to be *luin ta*. What this means exactly is not apparent, but after marriage the woman and her husband are required to perform the *luin tā* rite. They repair to the house of the head of the family bearing presents of food, and only enter the house after making the circle of it three times. They bring with them, or at least ought to bring with them, a fish (*ka kanon*, 'the banded snake-head') of the size of one's wrist. The fish is tied with a nose rope to represent a buffalo, and is led or at least pulled round the house in making the circuit three times. On each occasion on reaching the kalok post a stop is made and apparently a question asked. The words used have no meaning to any one now and may be quite different from the original formula. In Siam it is *dī ma ni dok* and is understood to be the equivalent of asking whether the kalok is yet satisfied with what has been done. On the third round, it is understood that satisfaction has been given. The fish is then taken up into the house, and having been cut into seven pieces is cooked. The seven pieces of fish with seven portions or dishes of rice are set out in the centre of the floor as an offering. The feast is then proceeded with and portions are sometimes thrown down for the spirit. This is probably the rite referred to in the *Burma Census Report*, 1911, Part I, page 149, in section 132 headed "Totemism." As it is one of the things that may be put off until a more convenient season, it is quite likely to take place often at harvest time. It is only attended to once for each woman and it seems to be called for often when there is need felt for honouring the kalok. The women are not exactly cut off

from the connection, as they are still bound to come when a kalok dance is arranged in the family.

Often it happens that in a Talaing village you find a man of other race married to a Talaing woman and using the Talaing language. The issue of this marriage is to all intents and purposes Talaing. Since, however, the kalok follows the male line only, such families have no *kalok shi*, or house spirit. The only connection they can have with the kalok is through their wives, but the men are not bound to observances and seem invariably to disclaim any connection with the kalok. I have met men in Talaing villages whose fathers had been Siamese, Talaing apparently in everything except in this deference to the kalok, and even speaking Siamese with a Talaing accent like other Talaings. One old man I met at Lophburi, not distinguishable from other Talaings in language and manner of life, told me that his grandfather was a Brahman, and that he had no connection with the kalok. This all proves that the kalok follows the male line, and that the woman is more or less cut off from her original connection and hence cannot transmit the connection to her issue.

When a man who has been the head of the family dies, the position descends to the next of kin in the male line, first to the sons in order of age, then to brothers, and even to nephews. Failing an heir in the male line, the kalok or family becomes extinct. I met with a case near Ayuthia where the natural head of the family, the eldest brother, refused to have anything to do with the cult of the kalok. In that case the next brother is the head of the family as far as the kalok is concerned, and the kalok property is kept at his house. The wife of the eldest brother recognises the kalok by giving money to help when any outlay is necessary. I had my information from the mother of this family of three sons and some daughters who of course do not count. This old woman told me that her father was of Burmese race from Ava and that he brought his own kalok with him to Siam. He had

a cocoanut adorned with red and white cloth hung on the south-east corner post just where the Talaings hang the basket with the vestments and ornaments of the kalok, and that no one dare go near it. After his death the family removed the post bodily. I give this as pointing to a distinction between Burmese and Talaings.

When on account of distance or any other inconvenience in attending to the various functions it is thought desirable to hive off and start a new kalok or family circle, those who wish to make the new departure must come to the original shrine and get exact copies of all the vestments and ornaments. Everything necessary must be as before. The same colours and the same checks and patterns must be used. It is the same kalok and must be treated in exactly the same way.\*

There are persons male and female who are supposed to know all about the kalok, the various things necessary for observances, and to be able to interpret the kalok's mind. They are called *doñ*, which we ought probably to translate 'medium.' They are the chief assistants at the kalok dance. I made the acquaintance of one, a very decent old woman at a Talaing village on the Meklawng, and got from her some interesting information with respect to the kalok. It is not always that you can get people to speak freely of such things and I was all the more indebted to her for the ready way in which she gave her information. She said she was called to Talaing villages far and wide, visits to some of which meant putting out to sea. She was intensely in earnest and quite believed in the efficacy of a due deference to the kalok. She had seen some marvellous recoveries from illness by just acting on the assumption that the kalok was angry. One youth with a chronic affliction,

\* Marriage is not permitted within the kalok. That is, a man must seek his wife from a family having another kalok. The Talaings are thus exogamists in principle. The probability is that they were originally regular exogamists, but as will be seen there is now a tendency to hive off and split up the clan.



MAN WITH WEAPONS AND ACCESSORIES USED IN THE DANCES.



she was sure, would have been free from it long ago, if his people had but given the kalok his due. She had of course met with cases where the limit of life had been reached and nothing could avail. I wrote down to her dictation in Talaing some lists which I propose to use. There is no doubt somewhat of local colour about them, but in the main they agree with what one sees in Burma, and with the references to such matters in the writings. These, however, will be better given in describing the dance.

#### THE KALOK DANCE.

The spirit dance, known to Burma people as the 'nat' dance, is frequently seen in Talaing villages. It is held in connection with sickness or calamity, and is generally with a view to the alleviation of sickness, though sometimes it is in consequence of a vow in case of recovery. In Siam this dance seems to be confined to the Talaings and their kinsfolk the Cambodians. The Siamese come frequently as onlookers. A booth is erected in front of the house, in Burma often right in the roadway. This booth or shed is called *shī kaṇā* or simply *kaṇā*, and the dance *leh kaṇā* or *leh kalok*. An orchestra is hired consisting usually of drum, clarion, bamboo clappers and cymbals. The men erect the booth and then very often in Burma, at least, leave things pretty much to the women. The men it has seemed to me have appeared rather shamefaced when found taking part in the ceremony.

The list of food-stuffs as given by the *don* is as follows :—

- “ 100 red cakes mixed with jaggery ;
- 100 white cakes unmixed with jaggery ;
- 100 packets of cake mixed with jaggery and wrapped in plantain leaf ;
- 100 pieces of jackseed pudding [the jack seeds are made of stiff batter] ;
- 100 portions of parched rice, a slab of stirred batter pudding.



Having danced from morning till midday take a fowl.  
When the sun is getting low in the west you must take  
a tortoise,

four strings of Abhik flowers,  
nine trays of flowers (of any kind),  
one tray of plantain-leaf packets,  
one *galun* (a kind of eel)."

The food-stuffs are all eaten by the company. Before eating the fowl a portion must be offered to the kalok with these words: "We have cooked a fowl and give of it to the *kalok sni* to eat."

Similarly, in presenting a portion of the tortoise, they must say, "We have gotten a tortoise and we give of it to the *kalok sni* to eat."

To this feast all the houses pertaining to the kalok must come or must at least send representatives. The *don* must be there dressed up in the vestments as representing the kalok and must lead off the dance. The women of the family then take part as they feel the kalok's influence. They seem actually for the time possessed. In replying to any question put to them whilst in this state of ecstasy, they are understood to be speaking for the kalok. Passing along the street in a large village in the Amherst district, we saw an old woman at one of these functions dancing in quite a frenzy, and not long after we saw her pass on the way home quite herself again, but carrying in her arms her present of cocoanut, plantains, etc. She was no doubt a medium. I heard an old midwife, who had been an eye-witness, relate an incident which took place in a Talaing village in Siam and which gives some idea of the way in which this possession by the kalok manifests itself. A young girl was taken ill of what seems to have been plague. When in a very low state and quite unconscious, another girl suddenly commenced dancing and was understood to be possessed by the kalok. On being questioned about the sick girl the answer was given that she would recover. Just then the sick girl showed signs of reviving and even asked about her father who had been absent in the fields and her brothers and sister, and whether

an uncle who had been to the city had returned. She also took food given to her. Then the other girl had a second turn of dancing, but nothing could be got from her but dumb show. It was but a momentary revival with the sick girl and she died soon after. It was understood that the kalok had first expressed his intention to release the girl and then had become indifferent.

In Talaing villages in Siam the dance is often a great affair lasting the whole day, and strangers gather round to look on.

The list of vestments as given by the *don* is as follows:—

“Put in the kalok basket:

Nine bamboo cups filled with *sat* leaves.

A coverlet twelve cubits long.

A loin cloth four cubits long.

A scarf or shawl five cubits long.

A red cloth three cubits long.

A white cloth four cubits long, with a band of red sewn on it.

One ring with a red stone.

One bracelet.

These are the vestments of the *kalok shi*. If we Mons do not reverence the kalok there will be sickness and pain.”

When sickness comes in the family it must be seen to that everything is in good condition. If moth has eaten, rat bitten, or fire burned any of the clothing, or if a stone has dropped out of the ring or any little damage been done, renewals must be made at once.

It is on account of reverence due to the kalok that a pregnant woman is not allowed to lie down in another's house. She may walk up into the house and go about any of the outer parts and she may even sit down, but she must not lie on any part of it at all, not even on the open space at the top of the stair, and she must on no account enter the inner house. To allow her to go into the forbidden part, or to lie down anywhere, would be to bring down the wrath of the kalok. This brings

about a state of things sometimes that causes one to think the people inhospitable and unkind when the motive is not understood. Here is a case which came under my notice in the Amherst district. A man died leaving his wife and children destitute and without a house to call their own. The widow was in the family way and wanted to stay over her confinement in the house of a family who had been very friendly, but they refused her though they allowed their daughter-in-law to come from a distance and be confined there about the same time. Evidently the kalok was the difficulty. The son's wife was of their kalok whilst the widow was of another kalok. According to the Lokasamutti it is allowable to build a shed for a homeless pregnant woman by the house of a relative and let her be confined there. Should a pregnant woman inadvertently lie down in a house where it is not allowed, a dance must be arranged at the woman's expense.

It is much the same when an accident has taken place from home. If a person is brought to a house wounded and bleeding, no matter how bad he is, nor how much the people may pity his condition, he must first be laid down outside, the bleeding stopped and the wounds properly dressed before he can be taken in. I was witness of a case where a youth was badly gored by a bull. I helped to wash and dress his wound on the spot where the accident happened and saw him carried away by his friends, but when we were passing the house some little while after the wounded youth was lying on the ground. They had not been satisfied that he was quite fit to be taken in. This was in Burma and I have heard of cases of the same kind in Siam.

#### THE HARVEST OFFERING.

When the first fruits of the harvest are brought home a feast is due to the kalok, but should it not be convenient to have it at the proper time, a cocoanut

and a basket of rice must be brought and placed by the kalok post in the south-east corner as an earnest that the feast is to be duly given. The cocoanut and the rice can of course be used when the feast takes place. There are some peculiar customs observed by certain Talaings at harvest time which must have something to do with the deference to the kalok. In rural districts in Burma there is a good deal of borrowing and lending just before and in the early days of the harvest. Those who are fortunate in having early crops are sometimes asked to supply the pressing needs of those who are not so fortunate and whose last year's supply is finished. Some Talaings when approached for a loan of paddy will turn a deaf ear and appear to take no notice of the borrower. Later in the day, however, the borrower will find a basket set out on the path somewhere with the needful supply. Others again whose custom is known are not approached on the matter at all. The borrower simply takes a sickle and goes and cuts the grain to supply his needs. There is a similar custom with regard to the tortoise. When one has need of a tortoise and knows of a person who has some, he simply goes and takes one. If he went and spoke to the owner about the matter it would be useless. He might talk till he was tired, but he would simply have to go and take what he wanted in the end.

#### THE TORTOISE TRADITION.

There is a special tradition regarding the tortoise as may be seen both from the above and from the reference to it in connection with the kalok dance. When a Talaing sees one and cannot get it for his own use or does not want it at the time he must say, "It is rotten, it smells," and pass on. Should, however, a tortoise by any chance be taken home, it must then be cooked; but, before any one has partaken of it, what is due to the house spirit must be offered first of all. To this end the head of

the tortoise, together with what is called the head of the cooked rice (the top part of the rice in the pot), must be offered. Sometimes the feet and the tip of the tail are also offered, thus making a complete tortoise. This rule is general amongst Talaings who give heed to such things. When eggs of the tortoise are eaten, one must first be offered to the spirit. This tradition is referred to in Part I, *Burma Census Report*, 1911, at pages 148-9 under the head of "Totemism," but 'turtle,' which is misleading, is used instead of 'tortoise.' This seems an easy mistake for observers working through Burmese or Siamese. Talaing has a distinct name for the tortoise. Talaings make no trouble about the sea-turtle or its eggs.

A Talaing up the Menam above Bangkok told us that his brother once brought home a tortoise, and, having cooked it, ate it without taking any heed to the tradition. The same evening he was taken ill, and died soon after in great agony. Others vouched for the severity of the illness and its end. Our informant looked upon the matter as a mere superstition on his own part, but he seemed to think that those who accepted the tradition must obey the instructions to the letter. This tradition is general amongst Talaings.

As will be seen from the account of the kalok dance, fowls come in for similar treatment. A portion has to be offered to the kalok.

#### THE SNAKE TRADITION.

There is a similar custom with regard to snakes but that does not seem to be general, only those subject to it having to give heed. Should a Talaing belonging to the tribe or class subject to the snake see a snake he must cry out, "Our grandfather and grandmother," and pass on. He must not strike it or try to harm it in any way. A Talaing woman at Lophburi in Siam told us that she belonged to the snake class, and that it was not permissible for them to harm a snake in

any way. The cobra most of all is not to be touched. She was the mother of one son then a monk. When he was born as she lay by her fire a snake came and coiled itself on her bosom. She simply did nothing. Suitable offerings were made and it went away. It then coiled itself round the baby and again went when offerings had been made. And at each special occasion of the child's life the snake again appeared. We can place what construction we like on the woman's story, but it is a statement of the belief of a certain class of Talaings.

#### THE SPIRITS AND SICKNESS.

There is a wide and general belief, evidence of which has been given in speaking of the *kalok sñi*, that sickness is often the result of certain supernatural influences, and everything must be done to appease the wrathful spirit or turn it away in some fashion. I have heard even of mock funerals in which a plantain stalk took the place of a corpse to delude the spirit into the idea that his victim had gone. One man came to me for the loan of a gun, explaining that everything had been tried and the friends wondered whether the firing of a gun would frighten the evil influence away.

In persistent cases of sickness the doctor is called upon to decide as to the special influence at work. In a medical book printed at Paklat, Siam, he is instructed how to feel the pulse and be able to say what influence is at work. To find the course of the blood if the patient is a woman he is to take the left hand, if a man the right. He is to begin at the wrist and gradually go over the palm and then the fingers beginning with the thumb, and according to the movement of the blood as he feels, he will be able to say whether it is *kalok mi ma*, 'the spirit of parents'; *dewatau padai sñi mñah sñi*, 'the spirit inside or outside the house'; *wāsu* (vasuki?) *kla sarāi*, 'wild tiger'; *gamuy*, 'a witch or wizard'; *dewatau gruiþ wā*, 'spirit of forest'; *kalok bau*,

*kalok mi*, 'spirit of grandmother, spirit of mother'; *kalok sñi*, 'house spirit'; *bayu ñuñ kwan*, 'guardian spirit of town or village'; *dewatau chu*, 'spirit of tree'; or whether it is that the *puñ samū*, 'the patient's own spirit or fairy,' which has temporarily left him.

#### BAU JU.

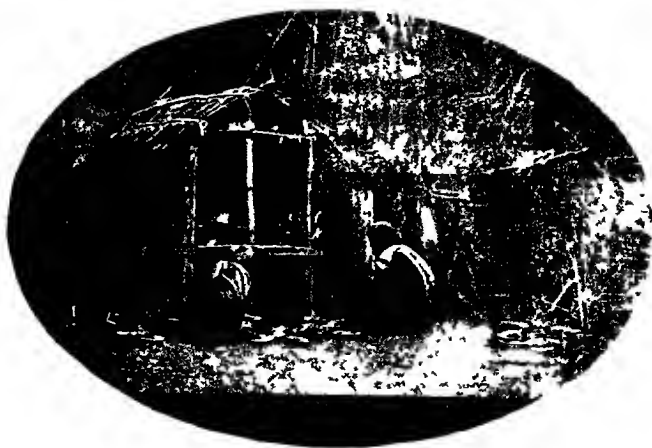
Each village has its shrine for the *bau ju*, or guardian spirit of the place. These shrines are also found in places where there are no human habitations near. They are generally marked by a little house, but that does not always seem to be necessary. This little house is not to be confounded with the spirit house to be seen in the neighbourhood of some Talaing dwellings, numbers of which may be seen often in one village. These are the dwellings of the house spirits. In some cases, if not in all, they are built as temporary accommodations for the house spirit until it can be accommodated in a regular house. In one case where I saw one of these little houses for the house spirit, a man had come to live with his father-in-law and, as he was of a different *kalok* and had brought his own *kalok* with him, his *kalok* had to be thus provided for in a separate house.

At shrines of the *bau ju* offerings are made by which the spirit's jurisdiction is recognised and its help craved. People going on a journey are particularly careful to honour the little wayside shrines of this kind, evidence of which is always seen in the remains of offerings. The people's confidence in the protection and care assured by these offerings is illustrated by the following incident. A man had lost one of his cattle and was unable to find it. Remembering, fortunately, the *bua ju*, he went to the shrine and making a suitable offering desired the needed help. He went right away from the shrine and found the missing animal at once.

The nature of the protection sought and the attitude of certain others is shown in another story. Two men went on a journey, and having to spend the night in the jungle, before going to sleep each in his own way



BAU JU FESTIVAL—BRINGING THE OFFERINGS.



BAU JU SHRINE—DON ARRANGING THE OFFERINGS.





prepared his defences for the night. One man went to the *bau ju*, or guardian spirit of the place, and making a suitable offering craved protection for the night. The other, as a good Buddhist, recited the three refuges and the five precepts. A tiger came along in the night and was going to attack the first man, when the spirit interposed and claimed the man as hers. The tiger then went to the other man, but found him repeating the three refuges and of course could not touch him. He then turned back to the other man, but the *bau ju* still claimed the life of her devotee, and so the tiger went from the one to the other until the spirit grew tired of it and said to the tiger: "If you will have the man take him." The narrator showed thus that it was better to trust in the refuges of the religion than to trust in the *bau ju*.

The *bau ju* has an annual festival when special attention is given to the shrine and there is some feasting and dancing. At such times questions are asked of those who after dancing are said to be possessed by the spirit and the answers given are understood to be the prophecy of the *bau ju*. The questions asked are public ones concerning the rains and the prospects for the crops and also whether there will be any epidemic disease.

A regular medium may be consulted at any time on either public or private matters. All that is needful is to seek the medium at his or her home, but the seeker must not go empty-handed. A slight acknowledgment in money or kind is required. The medium hears the request and then waits for the inspiration. The spirit comes and reveals the information, his coming being announced to the outsider by the violent shaking which is seen to come upon the medium.

There is no doubt a general weakening of the belief in such things, and even when the customs entailed are strictly followed, it is often more a keeping of the traditions handed down than anything else. There is nevertheless evidence on every hand of the hold which these traditions have on the people.

## THANIM.

A very common sight in the neighbourhood of Talaing villages, reminding one of the belief in the spirit world, is the offerings one sees by the roadside. At times the offering is just being made and one sees the suppliant and hears her address the unseen. This is called by the people *tho' thanim*. A person has taken suddenly and somewhat strangely ill. The *saw*, or doctor, is consulted or the persons concerned may know the rule. The afflicted person has been out and has had a fright. This is *thanim*.

The following explanation of the seizure with instructions for procedure is taken from the work *Lokasiddhi*. If the day and the direction are contrary *thanim* must result, that is, the seizure takes place when a person goes in a direction other than that prescribed for the day.

On Sunday, the proper direction is south, but should you go north-west, fright from a dog will result in *thanim*. In the afternoon you must go north and offer food. Make two baskets and put in rice and curry in three portions; arrange leaves, flowers and fruits in five portions. Make an image of the great demon and set down to the north. Put one basket to the north-west. In two days there will be relief from the fright.

On Monday, when the proper direction is north-west, you have gone east, and have seen a demon guarding the stump of a great tree. Or it may have been south-west and you have seen a female demon. Make two baskets and put in leaves and flowers in two portions. Put two kinds of rice in each basket, with some butter and two pieces of flesh. Place the basket with handle to the east and that without handle to the south-west, and in two days there will be relief from the sickness.

On Tuesday, when the direction is east, you have gone north-east or south-west and have taken seriously ill. It is a woman spirit that is giving you trouble. Take fruits and flowers in five portions, fish, flesh, three kinds of boiled rice and a figure of the sick one and put

them in baskets. Set the handled one to the south-west and that without handle north-east.

The right direction for Wednesday is south-west and you have gone east or north. You have taken *thanin* with accompanying sickness. Take three portions of leaves and flowers and bind them round with red and white, varying the pattern. Put in two kinds of boiled rice with a figure of the spirit of the patient. Also boiled fish and three pieces of meat. Set the basket with handle to the north and that without handle to the east. You will have victory over all the directions and will have relief in two days.

The right direction for Thursday is north-east and you have gone south or north. A deva is giving you trouble of a surety. Take five portions of leaves and flowers and pilau rice with plantains, sugarcane, fish and meat. Make two baskets and set the one with handle to the south-east and that without handle to the south. In three days, not more, the sickness will be relieved.

On Friday south-east is the direction and one is sick, having gone south. He is *thanin tai brāi* on that occasion. Make two baskets quickly and put in the following, making no mistake:—About seven portions of fruits and flowers, some fish and flesh, a candle, boiled rice and cakes, parched rice with sesamum, together with plantains and sugarcane. Make and put in a figure of a demon. Take away the baskets and leave one to the north and the other to the west. Before three days are over, there will be relief from sickness.

The direction for Saturday is north, but you have gone west or south-east and again you are *thanin*, having been seized by a demon. You have thought of butter, or fish, or flesh, or you have eaten some kind of fruit and on reaching home you have turned ill. Put into the baskets leaves, flowers and fruits, full five portions of food; oil with earth, a coil of hair and comb, with turmeric, meat and fish, plantains and sugarcane, jaggery and parched rice, and a figure of the demon. Set one to the west and the other to the south-east. Put them down fittingly, wave before the patient and there will be relief from sickness in three days.

The medical book printed at Paklat, Siam, elsewhere referred to and described in the section on Literature, gives a description of the symptoms of the sickness for the various days. Thus on Sunday the patient is dizzy, dull of hearing, has a dry throat, has weariness in the limbs, headache, cannot sleep and has no appetite. On Tuesday the patient can hardly open his eyes, trembles all over and is unable to eat. On Thursday there is again the difficulty in opening the eyes, the tongue is dry and there is melting heat in the chest. These several symptoms occur and recur in varying combinations for the seven days.

According to the day and the direction in which he was going it is determined, as in the other book, which unseen personage he has met, and an offering must be made accordingly. A little basket-like vessel is made and lined with leaves, the kind of leaves varying according to the day of the occurrence, and in it are placed figures of men, spirits, or animals, with vegetables, flowers and fruits in little heaps. The offering must be carried forth by a woman in the direction specified and put down with an incantation varying according to the day of happening. The direction often is that in which the person was from home when the affliction took place. For Sunday the charm runs: "Uṃ namo Buddhassa uṃ namo dhammassa uṃ namo saṅghassa swaḥ haḥ." Apparently an ascription of praise to the three gems, followed by a request to clear out, the latter being addressed to the spirit which is holding the person in thrall. The instructions for the case of one taking ill on Monday end with "Repeat this charm: 'Uṃ yakkhiṇī swaḥ haḥ (Hai! spirit-woman, go away).'

Having said this put down the offering and the sickness will be cured in three days."

It may be mentioned that the instructions handed down both orally and in the books for the carrying out of these and similar ceremonies often differ in the different versions. That however does not matter. What really matters is that you pin your faith to a certain set of instructions and carry them out faithfully.

## WITCHCRAFT.

There are cases when the patient is said to be bewitched, that is, the person is held to be acting under the influence of a witch or wizard. The idea is that he or she is for the time possessed by the spirit of another person, though that person may be going about his or her duties as usual. The person seems temporarily deranged and quite irresponsible for his or her actions. Just how the witch people are supposed to take possession of the afflicted is not apparent, but I have heard Talaings in Burma speak of seeing a strange light running up one of the house posts at night and this is explained as the witch getting into the house to take possession of an inmate. The witch called *gamuy* is also said to be seen much as the droppings of fire from a torch as it is snuffed to encourage the flame. In jungle places it is seen as a light, fitfully, like a kind of will o' the wisp.

The doctor has found from the diagnosis that it is a case of bewitchment and proceeds to expel the influence. Certain preparations are made such as hanging a piece of cotton cord duly charmed round the neck of the patient. The doctor with a good stick in his hand takes up a threatening attitude and orders the witch to come out or else he will make a good use of his stick. The witch in the patient speaks up and refuses to go, saying that she has but come to visit her relatives. The doctor repeats certain gathās and blows on the patient's head, but this has no effect. He then takes a piece of ginger which he peels and sharpens to a point. With this he prods all over the body to arouse the spirit of the witch. The patient remonstrates gently at first and then cries out as if in pain. The doctor now stands up again and thumps his stick on the floor and calls to the witch to sit up. The patient rises to a sitting posture and after more threats the witch promises to go. When it is seen that the witch has gone out, the woman of the house takes up a tray or vessel with certain food offering which the witch is understood to want and follows the departing

witch out of the house. It all seems very strange but the people appear to get relief by it.

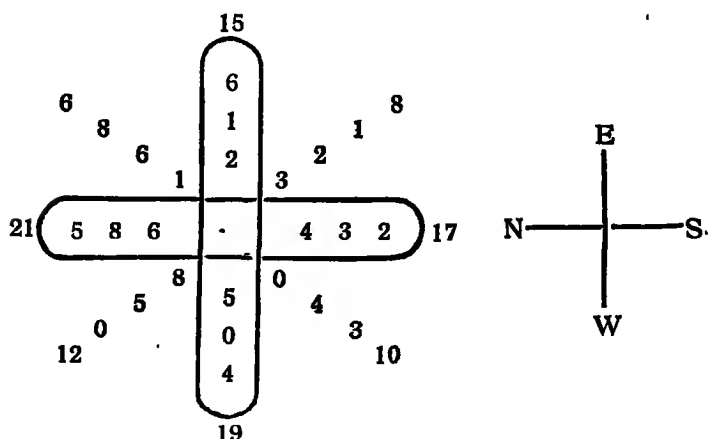
Some profess to exorcise the evil influence by repeating Pali gathās. Speaking to an old Siamese Talaing one day about the matter, he told me he could drive out the *gamuy*. "How do you do it?" I asked; "do you use a stick and order it to come out?" "Nothing of the kind," he said; "I simply recite some holy verses." "Let me hear them," I said, and he recited quite a long piece. "What does it all mean?" I asked. "I do not know. They are words of the doctrine," he said.

#### PROPITIATING THE PLANETS.

I was walking along a street in Ye in the Amherst district one morning, when, in passing a house with the inmates of which I had some acquaintance, I saw something unusual taking place. I stepped aside and went in, there being no objection but rather an invitation to do so. A daughter of the house was seated on the floor in the attitude of worship and specially dressed for the occasion. On the floor near her sat an elderly man who lived in the neighbourhood. The old gentleman was lifting up sprigs of leaves from the floor and handing them to the young woman. As she took these from his hand, she put them between her palms and repeated after him some ritual. This was done until all the leaves were used up. On the floor near them was a large basin containing a cocoanut, some plantains, betel-leaf, etc., and in the bottom of the vessel a four-anna piece. The fruits and betel were the woman's gifts to the old man assisting her in the ritual, an astrologer of a kind, and the piece of money was his fee. The rite was explained to me as *pwa ma prāk gruik daruch dai*, 'the offering of propitiatory gifts to the planets,' and was being done, they said, because the young woman had been in ill health. In the *Mon History of Pegu* by the Monk of Aswo', this duty is mentioned in company with the keeping of the precepts and taking refuge in the three gems.

But it will be best to explain the matter as it is set forth in the writings. There are eight planets called collectively *gruih dacām*, *gruih* being the Sanskrit 'graha' in a Talaing dress. Individually they are *Aduit*, *Can*, *Añā*, *Buddhawā*, *Braubati*, *Suik*, *Sñisaw* and *Rāhu*. Each of these eight planets has assigned to it a certain number of devatas, and these are all to be recognised in the offering. The number of ticals of rice, the number and length of the candles, and the number of streamers and umbrellas in the offering must correspond with the number of devatas pertaining to the particular planet. *Aduit* has six devatas assigned to it; *Can*, fifteen; *Añā*, eight; *Buddhawā*, seventeen; *Braubati*, nineteen; *Suik*, twenty-one; *Sñisaw*, ten; and *Rāhu*, twelve.

To find the planet which is influencing a person a little calculation has to be made by some one acquainted with the rules. There are men who set up as astrologers and are consulted on these matters. A cross is drawn as in the



above figure. Beginning at north-east, which is the direction for *Aduit*, the numbers 6, 15, 8, 17, 10, 19, 12, 21 are written round. These indicate the number of devatas assigned to the planets. Then the figures of the



inner circle, beginning at the same point, 1, 2, 3, 4, 0, 5, 8, 6 are written. These except 8 represent the days of the week, and also indicate the planets bearing the same names. The number 8 fills up the eighth space and indicates the dark planet, Rāhu. Having completed the circle, the numbers are advanced a space and written round in a circle once more in the same order. The numbers are again written in a third circle, being advanced another space. This puts three planets into each of the eight directions, and the outside number are to be divided by three to get the number of years assignable to the influence of each planet as indicated by the three numbers in any particular space. To find the planet under whose influence a person is at any time, take the person's age and the day of the week on which he was born. Begin at the day as indicated in the diagram and count round until you get the number of years. Thus, if a person is 54 years of age and was born on a Friday, begin at the space indicated by 6 in the inner circle which indicates Suik, the sixth day of the week, and also the planet of the same name. The number 21 at the extremity of the arm divided by three gives seven years each to the planets indicated by the numbers 6, 8 and 5. That is, for the first seven years of his life this person was under Suik, but on entering his eighth year he entered into the sphere of Rāhu and again in his fifteenth year into the sphere of Braubati, and so on counting round we find that in his fifty-fourth year he is under the influence of Buddhawā. He must therefore use the formula set for that planet. The formulas for the eight planets are all very similar except in the particulars mentioned above with respect to the numbers of the different articles to correspond with the number of devatas assigned to each planet. The direction, too, in which the offering is to be placed varies with each as indicated.

The observance for Aduit (Sanskrit *Aditya*, 'the sun') as given in the *Lokasiddhi* runs thus:—"Make a round vessel [of plantain stalk] one hand in length. Take six ticals weight of white rice. Divide into two parts. With

one part make boiled rice, colour with turmeric and lime and place in the centre of the vessel. Of the other part make flour, mix with turmeric and lime, and rolling it out on the body make two figures, one of a garuda and another of the patient, and put them in the vessel. Colour also six umbrellas and six streamers with turmeric and lime; surround the whole with plantain, sugarcane, cake, preserves and betel. Light six candles of six fingers breadth in length and set aglow some tapers perfumed with sandalwood. Let the person robe himself in red cloth, put on a diamond ring and taking six red flowers let him repeat a charm six times and put a flower in the vessel each time. This is the charm he is to repeat: 'Namatthu te Ravi rājā, devatā nam supā gato. Gruddham yānañca Ravi rājā, namāmi hañ. Yo so āditya devo, rattavaṇṇo rattavattho rattabharāṇa sampanno. Mahabbalo, so devo saha parivāro, idhā gacchantu maṇḍāle dassaniye mano ramme pañatte supañattañ supa byañcana sampannañ salinañ bhojanañ varañ idaṃ pujañ telañ gandha vile panañ idaṃ pujañ pakāraṇaṃ patiggaṇhaṇtu sadhukañ. Te pitañ anurakkantu arogena sukhenaca.' [This ends the actual charm. What follows is an epitome of the sense in the vernacular with instructions as to the offering.] 'Aditya Graha, riding on a lion carriage with a numerous retinue, come thou and receive my offering.' Having repeated this charm, put down the offering to the north-east, and of the adverse influence of Aditya Graha he will be free."

For the remaining seven planets the instructions are similar though quantities vary, the animals on which the devas ride differ and the direction in which the offering is to be placed varies until the eight points have been reached.

## SECTION VI.—LANGUAGE.

It has generally been assumed that the absorption of the Talaing race by the Burmese and the consequent disappearance of the Talaing language were just a matter of time. The figures for the census of 1911 show a remarkable increase in the number of Talaings speaking their own language, whilst there is no corresponding increase in the race numbers, but rather a slight decrease. In Siam, too, the impression is generally that the Talaings there are being all the time more and more absorbed by the Siamese. But, there they are, in their own villages, using their own language, and, whilst the same accuracy of necessary statistics is not available as in Burma, whereas Sir John Bowring, following Pallegoix and others, gave 50,000 as the number of Mons in Siam in the middle of last century, a recent book, *Siam*, by W. A. Graham, gives 60,000. No doubt the printing of Mon books at Paklat will help greatly to the conservation of the language. True, as in Burma, the Burmese tends to supplant Talaing in the schools; so in Siam, Siamese is being more and more taught; schools for the teaching of Siamese being quite commonly found in the grounds of Mon monasteries.

The Talaing language belongs to the Mon-Khmer sub-family of the wider group, now denominated Austro-Asiatic. The books tell us that Anuruddha took with him monks and others versed in literary composition when he sacked Thatôn and carried away its king to Pagan in A.D. 1057. Some thirty years later (A.D. 1085) the Myazedi inscriptions at Pagan were inscribed, among which a Talaing version appears. In the opinion of Mr. C. O. Blagden, who has given considerable attention

to old Talaing inscriptions and is the authority on ancient Talaing, that language is not only the oldest literary vernacular of Burma but possibly of all Indo-China.

In an Indo-Chinese language the question of tones always comes up. In the opinion of most who are competent to say anything about the matter, Talaing is spoken without tones, and even where this is disputed there is no attempt made to show any system of tones such as exists in the languages of the Siamese-Chinese sub-family. Village Mons in Siam for the most part show an utter lack of appreciation of the tones in Siamese. They simply speak Siamese without tones and consequently miss the distinctions in words distinguished by tones. I have heard a Talaing monk with some pretensions to scholarship teaching his boys arithmetic in Siamese in an even tone of voice which is quite at variance with Siamese usage. The first thing one notices almost about spoken Siamese is the tones. Still there is a variation in the pronunciation of Talaing words which will be noticed in due course.

Talaing, like other Indo-Chinese languages, using modifications of the Indian alphabets, is written from left to right. There is no division between words in a sentence, although to the practised eye each word stands out quite distinct from its neighbour. The punctuation is indicated by two little vertical strokes called *puit* (pät), from Pali *pado*, 'a sentence.' The end of a paragraph is indicated by the *pät* repeated with a short space between. In the palm-leaf manuscripts these are the only breaks in the lines and they are put down often at the will of the copyists; different copies of the same work being often differently punctuated. To get at the sense one has quite frequently to ignore the punctuation.

Talaing is largely monosyllabic. In words of apparently two syllables there is a tendency in the spoken language to make them monosyllabic or as nearly so as possible. In the same way Indian loan words are usually clipped and, where possible, reduced to monosyllabic form. The clipped syllables are not indicated

in modern spelling. Words of more than one syllable were probably formed from original monosyllabic roots. Prefixes, infixes and combination have brought about the change. Words are often monosyllabic or dissyllabic according to the place they fill. Thus *pluit* (plāt), 'to be extinguished,' but *palāt*, 'to extinguish'; *klon*, 'to work'; *kalon*, or with infix *kamlon*, 'work'; *dreṣ*, 'to run'; *dareṣ*, 'to cause to run'; *dlu* or *glu*, 'to be dark'; *dalū*, *damlu*, 'darkness.' As in other Indo-Chinese languages words are not always to be set down as verbs, adjectives, nouns, etc. They are nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc., according to the use made of them.

The alphabet is derived from Indian sources and preserves the original arrangement of the letters as far as possible. It is practically the same as the Burmese, but it has two additional consonants and there are differences in the vowels. Old Talaing seems to have had the two Sanskrit sibilants 'ś' and 'ṣ'; but these, the modern Talaing has lost. The 'r' and 'l' vowels are not in use, and where a Sanskrit word with 'r' is to be transcribed, a combination of 'r' and one of the diphthongs is used. There are no descriptive names for the consonants such as are found in Burmese, each being known by its pronunciation with the inherent vowel sound, as *kā*, *kha*, *ke* (ga), *khe* (gha), *ñe* (ṇa). With the two extra letters both modifications of 'b' and 'a' reckoned as a consonant, there are thirty-five consonants. The first twenty-five are represented in the original vargas. As in Burmese some of the letters are used only in Indian loan words and sometimes not even then. These are the cerebrals 't', 'th' and 'ḍh' and the sibilant 'l'. The 'd' sound of the language is represented by the cerebral 'ḍ'.

The inherent vowel sound is not always short 'a' as in Burmese. Some are vocalised with a short 'e' sound. Thus in the first five vargas the two first letters have 'a' and the remaining three 'e' except in the cerebrals 'ḍ' and 'ṇ' which have 'a'. These are always repeated in fives, whilst the remainder are run off in a string. These latter have some the one sound and

some the other. But it is not only in the vowel sound that they differ. Those with 'ē' are sounded further back in the throat and this gives to the vowel a deeper tone. Here, if anywhere, we have an approach to the system of the tone languages. And the same purpose is served by it. You have words with what appear to be the same letters but having a different meaning. Still it does not quite correspond with the tone systems for the reason that there is usually a change of the vowel sound. Thus, using the equivalents of the original alphabets *puīt* is pāt; *buit*, pūt. In the one case you have a modified 'a' and in the other a modified 'u', whilst the consonants are practically the same in both cases. It may be of interest to point out that this *buit* is made to represent in the language, besides the ordinary words 'to throw' and 'to swoop,' the Indian 'veda' and 'vajra.' It is the enunciation of the sounds represented by this second class of consonants, the original sonants, which gives to the spoken language perhaps its most characteristic distinction. The sounds seem harsh as compared with the Burmese. And yet when one gets accustomed to the language there is quite a charm about its sound. It is to be remarked that the sacred Pali is read and recited after the same system. 'Buddha' is pronounced 'Putthè' and sounded back in the throat.

The consonants which may be used as finals are 'k', 'ñ', 't', 'n', 'p', 'm', 'y', 'w', 'h' and 'a'. Except in the cases of 'k' and 'ñ' these all have their own characteristic sound. Final 'k' and 'ñ' following the vowels 'ā' and 'i' and sometimes 'e' change to 't' and 'n' respectively. Thus *ḍāk*, 'water,' is pronounced *dāt* or *daīt* according to dialect; *cin*, 'elephant,' becomes *cin* or *coin*, and *phēk*, 'to fear,' is pronounced *phoit*. The preceding vowel is also sometimes affected. As in Burmese, when a consonant is used as a final, it is said to be killed, that is, the inherent vowel sound is suppressed. 'Y' final is in fact the same as the eighth vowel and in modern Talaing is usually represented by it. Final 'a' shortens the preceding vowel sound and is only used

with long vowels having no corresponding short vowel.

The vowels as represented in the alphabet are twelve in number, and by the influence of consonants as indicated above we get several others. Combination of vowels gives us a few diphthongs. Dialectical differences in the different districts are largely brought about by modification and change of the vowel sounds. The same spelling serves for any dialect. Thus the combination 'p-u-t' is variously pronounced *put*, *paut*, *pawt*, *peit*. The vowels have each a descriptive name. The manner of spelling Talaing words orally is peculiar. If the syllable ends in a vowel, the consonant is usually named, then the syllable is pronounced, and the name of the vowel follows. In words ending with a consonant, the consonants initial and final are given, the word pronounced, and then the vowel sign is named. For example, *ka*, 'fish,' is spelled *ka amā*, that is, *ka* alone; *kh̄yū* pronounced almost *chū*, 'to write,' is spelled *kh̄ y ch*, *chū jak juing hā* ('two dragged legs' alluding to the form of vowel symbol); *hok* (cigar) *h̄ i kak hok tnom dāp* ('h' with 'k' final *hok anusvāra*).

Differences in idiom are no doubt due to surroundings. In common phrases, one observes that in Siam the idiom sometimes agrees with that of the Siamese, whereas in Burma it differs and is more in accordance with Burmese. Where there are synonymous words for the same thing, different words are used in different districts sometimes. Many common things which have been introduced in later times are known in Burma by the Burmese names, and in such cases Siamese Talaings use Siamese names. Of such are the words for 'chair' and 'table.' There is perhaps more conservatism in Burma than in Siam in this matter. It is open to question whether the Talaings of Burma have not sometimes coined names for things on the model of the Burmese names. Thus lamps of European manufacture are called *s̄hi p̄mot*, 'fire house,' in Burma like the *mī im* of the Burmese; whilst the Siamese word is adopted in Siam. And yet one has to go to Siam to hear some of the old Talaing expressions.

It seems as if it might be possible to check the bearings of these differences by reference to the literature, but the books represent an older form often of the language and it is possible that even they do not represent the real spoken language of their own age. Besides our knowledge of the literature is only of the slightest. Native scholars, who might be supposed to know more, can often give but little help in deciding such questions.

Burmese and Talaing have no doubt acted and reacted on each other especially in later times. The tendency naturally is to think, when one finds words common to the two languages, that Talaing in its decadence has simply adopted words from the more vigorous Burmese, and this especially when one thinks of the political relations of the two nations in later centuries. But this by no means explains all. There are several words in common use which are pronounced by Talaings as nearly as possible as the same words are spoken by the Burmese. These have of course then to be differently spelled. There are some, however, which have two forms of spelling in Talaing: one to correspond with the sound of the Burmese and one to correspond with the written Burmese. At first it looks as if the Talaings had borrowed from the Burmese and were in two minds, whether to adopt its orthographical or its phonetic form. *Thuik*, 'to be worthy,' is one of these. In Burmese it is pronounced *thaik* and in the Talaing it is pronounced *thāk* or *thait*. Now it is curious that Mr. Blagden has found both forms represented in the inscriptions. This takes it away back to the time when Talaing influence was helping to shape Burmese into literary form.

One thing seems certain and that is that, in earlier times, Talaing was the medium through which Indian influence was passed on to the Burmese. It was through that source that Indian religion and Indian literature very evidently reached the Burmese. There was an earlier Indian influence through Sanskrit and the northern form of Buddhism as the many Sanskrit words in Talaing largely help to prove. In later times the influence has been largely through Southern Buddhism and the Pali.



It is very remarkable that Indian words which have become part and parcel of the language and are treated as native words are from Sanskrit rather than Pali sources. There is, for instance, the word *dharma*, having in Buddhism the special meaning of the doctrine or truth of the Buddha. It becomes in Talaing *dhaw*, 'w' taking the place of 'r' and the final syllable being set aside. Talaing, unlike Siamese, takes no notice of silent letters and syllables. This represents the Sanskrit form. When the Pali form is used it is written and spoken in the full form, *dhamma*. *Dhaw*, however, is not used in its religious significance alone. As such it is on every one's lips. A Talaing when taken by surprise gives vent to the expression *kyāk, dhaw, sañ*, the usual name for the precious things of Buddhism, the Buddha, the Truth and the Order. But the word *dhaw* is used in everyday discourse with the meaning 'right,' 'truth,' 'integrity,' and it is even used adverbially with the meaning 'singly.' The common Talaing word for heaven, the abode of the blessed, is *swaw*, the *svarga* of Sanskrit. An example of a longer word and its treatment is *kaw-la pa bruih*, the name of a miraculous fruit-bearing tree which grows in Indra's heaven and is a symbol of prosperity. This has been identified by Mr. Blagden as the Sanskrit *kalpa vrksa*. There the final syllable is again dispensed with, and the remainder treated as if it consisted of several monosyllabic words. The Sanskrit *daksina*, 'motion to the right,' is preserved in the books in the form *dak suin* and keeps in memory an old custom of respectful salutation. It is seen now chiefly at ordination ceremonies and at the funerals of monks. At the former the candidates go round the ordination hall and at the latter the coffin is carried round the pyre. Facing the object you take the direction to your right. It is called *pa dak suin pi wa*, 'making the turn to the right three times.' This word occurs in its Pali form *dakkhina* in the name of the conch shell used at the consecration of kings and queens. It is termed *dakkhinawaw*, 'turning to the right.' *Laksan*, the Sanskrit *lakṣaṇa*, a mark or sign, is retained in

preference to the Pali *lakkhaṇa* and is a term in very common use. The Sanskrit *aditya*, 'sun'; *candra*, 'moon'; *samudra*, 'sea,' are represented in *thai aduit*, 'Sunday'; *thai can*, 'Monday'; and *hmasamit*, 'sea.' Poetry often has the full Sanskrit forms.

Besides the days of the week, the names of the months, the zodiacal signs, the lunar mansions and terms used in astronomical astrological calculations are generally from the Sanskrit.

It is somewhat striking to find no native words for some of the commonest things. It seems as if the Indian terms had early pushed out the native words. It is possible that the Indian vernaculars are responsible for this as much as the literatures. Indian colonists could not so long remain on their borders evidently as separate communities without some such influence on the language of the Talaing people. The common word for 'country' is *rah*, from Sanskrit *rastra*. A 'kingdom' is *rah nī guim*, a combination of *rastra* and *nigama*. The only word for 'man' in its general sense is *nnih*, no doubt from *manuṣya* originally. Even such a common notion as a remainder, that which is left over, must be named by an Indian word *seh*, for 'sesa.' The word for heart or mind is *cuī* (cāt) for 'citra'; but whereas in Burmese or Siamese there are native words, either used with the Indian loan word or alone, in Talaing there is no native word to take the place of the Indian one.

Generalisations are made usually by naming two members of a group. Thus, if a Talaing wishes to speak of domestic animals he says *preñ, glau*, 'buffaloes, oxen,' or *ciñ, khyeh*, 'elephants, horses.' If he desired to speak of wild animals, he would say *kmim, kla*, 'bear, tiger,' or *klin, srit*, 'bison, rhinoceros.' Deer, of which there are a number of kinds, are mentioned by naming two, *kbañ drāi* or *man drāi*.

Somewhat similarly *ḍuñ rah*, 'town country,' and *ḍuñ kwān* are used respectively when speaking of the country in general or of its towns and villages. Thus, *ñah ḍuñ rah*, 'those of town and country,' is used for the inhabitants of the country, and *ñah ḍuñ kwān* when

speaking of village communities. In asking about the health of a community it is usual to say *dun kwān moñ miñ moñ hā*, 'Is it well with the community?' usually intended to mean "Is there no epidemic or contagious disease about?"

Again, in speaking of trees and plants in general, a Talaing says *tnain chu tñain dun*, or simply, *chu, dun*, 'trees, bamboos.' In speaking of fruits generally it is usual to say *sat chu* or *sat chu sat dun*. Seeds are *ma chu dun*. In naming any particular plant or tree, one of these general names must be used with the name of the individual, as *chu kla*, 'teak tree,' where *kla* is the particular name for 'teak'; *tnain sat brau*, 'a cocoanut-tree.' So with fruits: *sat brāt*, 'plantains'; *sat kruk*, 'mangoes.' So with flowers: *pkau*, more commonly *kau*, is the word for 'blossom,' and we have *kau dahah*, 'the lotus'; *kau kleñ latuip*, 'the rose.' The distinguishing name of any single plant has no definite meaning until you have supplied the word for tree or wood, or fruit or flower.

Number is not always indicated except as the sense points it out. *Mnih* is 'man' or 'men' according to its surroundings. *Mnih mwai* is 'one man'; *mnih hā*, 'two men.' *Sñi nwam* is either 'there is a house' or 'there are houses' as the case may be. The particle *tā* is sometimes used to express a plural, and the word *gamluin*, 'many,' is sometimes used in a similar sense.

Gender is not always shown. When desired certain words signifying male and female are used. In speaking of men and women, when it is desired to differentiate the sex, the words *truh* and *brau* are used, these apparently being original words for 'man' and 'woman' respectively. They are not now used alone except in the senses of 'husband' and 'wife.' An exception to this is the use of *truh* in epithets of the Buddha, as *truh tala lwī*, 'the one who was possessed of perseverance.' A man is *mnih truh* and a woman is *mnih brau*, when the speaker wishes to distinguish. For animals the words *bo'* and *kmak* are used: *glau bo'*, 'a cow'; *glau kmak*, 'an ox.'

The use of descriptive words when using numbers with nouns is not so general in Talaing as in other Indo-Chinese languages. There are cases where it is quite a necessity, others where it is not required and still others where it is optional. Trees, fruits and flowers require a descriptive word, as *tnam hnah mwai tnam*, 'one jack tree.' This is simply the word for 'tree' repeated. *Kau dakah pi don*, 'three lotus flowers,' *lit.* lotus flowers three blossoms; *sat brau hā ma*, 'two cocoanuts,' *lit.* cocoanuts two seeds. Things which go in pairs usually have a descriptive word, as *dnop mwai cho*, 'a pair of shoes,' *cho* signifying 'companionship'; *glau mwai thow*, 'a pair of oxen.' One of a pair is referred to as *mwai duih*, 'a side.' It is optional when speaking of persons to use a descriptive word or not; *talā*, 'master,' is used of men, but it is very common to use the numeral simply, as *mnih mwai*, 'one man.' It is usual to have a descriptive word in speaking of monks, as *lakyāk pi jaku*, 'three monks.' But even with *kyāk*, which in Buddhism means Buddha or his representations or memorials, it is not always used. There is the familiar phrase, *kyāk msun mwai kaw*, 'five Buddhas one kalpa,' which expresses the Buddhistic notion that five Buddhas is the complement of the present kalpa.

In the use of pronouns, the Talaings follow the usual practice of Indo-Chinese peoples, that is, either the pronouns are omitted altogether and terms expressing the relationship between the speakers are used, or these latter are used along with the pronouns. There are forms for the three persons, viz., *ai* (äa), 'I'; *beh*, in books *muah*, 'thou,' and *ñah*, 'he.' Only the first person has a separate form for the plural, *puīy* (pöe), 'we.' Even in this case the first and third singular may be used instead, *ai*, *ñah*, *lit.* 'I, he.' When it is desired to represent 'you' and 'they,' the ordinary method of indicating the plural of nouns is used. A person speaking to a recognised superior in age or position ought to say 'I (your) servant.' This form, however, is falling out of use in Talaing villages in Burma except when addressing

members of the religious order. In Siam, it is in universal use. When it comes to the second and third persons, the pronouns may not be used at all in speaking to or of a superior. Such words as father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, etc., or some word indicating the person's position must be used. In the third person the name with a suitable designation may be used of ordinary persons not closely related to the speaker.

Euphemistic phrases are much used. In speaking of contagious diseases, such as cholera and small-pox, it is usual to use some such phrase as the quick disease, the bad disease. It would seem as if people wanted you to understand without the thing itself being named. Death is not usually spoken of by its usual name, especially when the dead is nearly related. 'He has gone,' *ñah ā ra*, or 'he is wasted,' *luim ra*; 'he is not,' *hwa' mwai*, are some of the common phrases. In the histories the kings are said to 'return to heaven,' *cau swaw*. If it is desired to use the word for death *pa kā gcuít*, 'he has accomplished death,' is used. In Siam the somewhat poetical form *cau ñuñ kwān ñah*, 'has returned to his own community,' is frequently heard.

In translating from the Pali in the word for word fashion which is common in these books, it is necessary to represent the cases of nouns and the tenses and moods of verbs by the use of certain word which are either not used at all otherwise or have now no such place in the language. In ordinary Talaing all such distinctions are shown chiefly by the placing of the words in the sentence and by the use of a few particles having relation to the sentence rather than separate words. *Ai ca kluñ ñuñ, lit.* 'I eat come rice,' means 'I ate my meal before coming.' *Ñah ā rān phya,* 'he has gone to buy bazaar.' In both cases you have simply a pronoun, two verbs and a noun, and in each case the sense is complete.





MONK COPYING BOOKS ON PAPER 1141

## SECTION VII.—LITERATURE.

THERE is a considerable literature in the Talaing language, religious, historical and imaginative. Very few persons outside the Talaings themselves know anything about it, and very little has yet been done to bring it before Western readers. Phayre made use of Talaing manuscripts in writing his *History of Burma*. See his preface to that work and various references throughout the volume. But it is evident that he consulted them through translations. He gives names in their Burmese form. Talaing manuscripts seem to have been found for his use in Siam. Colonel Gerini has read Talaing historical works both in the original and through Siamese translations. See his list of Mon proverbs in the *Siam Society's Journal*, Volume I. In his learned volume, *Notes on Ptolemy's Geography of Eastern Asia*, he has many references to the Gavampati book. Prof. Schmidt of Vienna has given to Western readers *A History of Pegu in the Mon Language*, with translation into German transliteration and critical notes.

In recent years a number of Talaing books have been published at Paklat, Siam, but the number of outside persons able to read them is very limited. The printer and publisher is the Superior of the Kruñ Cīn Monastery. He first projected an edition of the Tripitaka in the Talaing character, which was to run to thirty-nine volumes, and of these, twenty-one volumes have been already published. In order apparently to bring in some ready money to keep the press going for the larger work, a number of lesser, popular, religious works were printed. Dr. Frankfurter, the chief librarian at the National Library, Bangkok, who was taking an interest in the



work, urged the printing of some of the historical books as more likely to interest the outside world; and, as a result, two volumes have already appeared. The first of these contains (1) a short history of Thatôn; (2) the book Gavampati, giving in the form of prophecies of the Buddha, through his disciple Gavampati, historical sketches of Thatôn and Pegu; and (3) Rājādhirāt, a history of Martaban and Pegu from Warero of Martaban to Bañā Thau of Pegu. The greater part of this third section, which occupies 328 pages of the 444 of the entire volume, is devoted to the king whose name gives the title to the work. The story of Warero and his successors is very fully given. A good summary of the Rājādhirāt book will be found in Chapter VIII of Phayre's *History of Burma*. That writer has very evidently followed this work for that period of Talaing history, except that he has read it in a Burmese translation and has made Warero a Shan instead of a Mon as he is in the Talaing work.

The second of these volumes takes its title from Dhammaceti, the Ramadhipati of the Kalyānī inscriptions of Pegu. The volume is by no means confined to the history of that monarch. It begins with a very brief sketch of the story of Thatôn, particularly of its siege and fall before the forces of Anuruddha of Pagan. The story of the founding of Pegu and a brief sketch of the history of the first dynasty are also given. Then there is a sketch of the rise of the Talaing monarchy at Martaban under Warero, and the story of his successors is briefly told up to the reign of Bañā Thau in Pegu. These sketches differ a good deal from those of the other volume though agreeing with them in the main, where the same facts are stated.

The story of Dhammaceti begins when he was a monk of twenty years of age, having studied the Tripitaka in Pagan from his fifth year. Returning to Pegu he became a very popular preacher by reason of his eloquence. His fame reaching the palace, Queen Bañā Thau invited him to her presence and, loving him as a son, presented

him with the things needful for ordination to the priesthood. His great learning gained for him the name of Mahapitakadhara or simply Pitakadhara, meaning 'versed in the Tripitaka.'

Subsequently Bañā Thau, while on her way to worship at the Shwe Dagôn Pagoda at Rangoon, was kidnapped by emissaries of the king of Burma, and carried off to the Burmese capital. Though having the dignity of chief queen, she sighed for her native city. It was then that Pitakadhara came to her aid. He went north and his fame as a preacher soon gained him access to the palace where no objection was raised to the queen receiving him in her own apartments as her spiritual counsellor. Her escape was planned and carried out and she was reinstated at Pegu, where she took up the reins of government. With true queenly dignity, she made the monk her uparājā, even in the face of the opposition of her nobles. She convinced them of the futility of their objection, on the ground that he was not of royal race, by having a statue of the Buddha made from a bridge-post and showing them that, just as a piece of wood which had been trodden under foot was worthy of their reverence when it took on the form of the Buddha, so they ought not to refuse their homage to the son she was raising to the royal dignity.

Pitakadhara had seen two signs which pointed to his being raised to the throne. When bathing on one occasion his garment had blown away on the wind and had lighted on the palace spire, and according to the book of *A Thousand Omens*, this was a sure sign of attaining to power and eminence. At another time two vultures, flying from the north-east and making the turn to the right three times, lighted in front of Pitakadhara and spoke to him in Pali. By that he knew he was indeed to be king. The book gives some account of his efforts at purifying the religion, but refers readers, who want to know particulars, to the Kalyānī inscriptions. It seems to have been the custom in those days, as it always has been for people who were not satisfied with the judgment

of the courts, to appeal to the higher courts until the king himself was reached. Dhammaceti had a reputation for just judgment and many stories are told in the book setting forth the wisdom of his decisions.

The greater part of the book, however, is devoted to the exploits of Bureng Naung, the Taungu Burmese king, under whom Pegu attained its greatest magnificence. His campaigns in Siam, Eastern and Northern Laos, and in the Shan States are all told. He is called by the Talaing writers *Jamnah Duik Cah*, the conqueror of the ten directions, that is, the eight principal points of the compass together with above and below.

This second volume bears evidence of being an older composition than the first. There are many old forms of spelling, and there are words not understood at all by present-day Talaings. This is by no means an uncommon thing with Talaing literature, but this volume presents more difficulty of interpretation than most works. It is probable that this work was written sometime in the seventeenth century. At any rate its language seems older than that of the Monk of Aswo', who began writing in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Other works published at Paklat are mostly religious. Some are manuals more for the use of members of the order apparently. One, however, is for the use of the devout householder as its title, *Upasako-vāda-gāthā*, shows. It gives a popular presentation of Buddhism both as to doctrine and practice. In the list are three popular poetical works on religious subjects.

*Kyāk Trai Ba Choh Dcam*, 'The Twenty-eight Buddhas.' According to the teaching of Buddhism there have been many Buddhas, but the names only of twenty-eight, including Gotama, have been preserved. Of these, as our author says, the first three were never seen by Gotama, and of them little is said except to indicate the conveyance on which each rode forth and the tree under which omniscience was attained. The fourth, however, Dipaṅkara, has the distinction that Gotama as Bodhisat came in contact with him. This Buddha was

crossing at a place where the bridge was four cubits short of reaching the other bank. The Bodhisat at once threw himself face down to complete the bridge and the Buddha and his following passed over. This is an incident in Buddhistic lore well known amongst the Talaings. Each Buddha saw the four signs of old age, death, sickness, and asceticism, and found omniscience under a tree of some sort. See Childers' Pali Dictionary articles "Buddho" and "Kappo" for the number and names of Buddhas and kalpas. The constant recurrence of the same set of facts in the life of each Buddha familiarises the reader with the various incidents in the life of Gotama. The birth-place, names of parents, royal state; the visions of impermanence and the pursuit of final emancipation, the renunciation of the world, the victory over the tempter, the attainment of omniscience constantly reiterated, whether by contrast or otherwise, keeps the various incidents before the mind. The date of this work is 1022 (A.D. 1660).

Another somewhat larger work and fulfilling similar ends, that is, keeping the excellence of the Buddha before the mind, is *Lik Bodhisat Cah*, 'The Book of Ten Bodhisats.' The book in its present form is the work of a Siamese Mon named Nai Pandita. He claims to be of Martaban lineage and writes at the age of thirty-seven in a monastery on the banks of the Menam. A book of the same name had been brought over from Burma in the troublous times which followed foreign rule in Pegu and caused thousands to seek refuge in Siam. The book was now in dilapidated condition and he resolved with what resources he could command to renew its form so that men and women of the future might receive of its benefits. He gives the date 1190, equal to A.D. 1828. He evidently had also before him an incomplete Pali version. This is an example of the way in which many of the books were written and accounts for various versions of what is practically the same work.

Special interest attaches to some of the other works printed at Paklat from the fact that they were written

by the Monk of Aswo', an author who has a great reputation for literary output amongst the Talaings. From the works printed, it is possible to make out some of the facts of his life and to gain some idea of the motive for his literary activity. Born in the beginning of the eighteenth century, he was in the prime of manhood when Thā Aung, the Burmese governor of Pegu, rebelled against Ava and proclaimed himself king. This governor was hated by the people for his unjust exactions, and no doubt his usurpation of supreme authority was the culminating point in making the Talaings determined to get rid of him. On account of the troubles of the time, a man of rank, named Buip Ba Asaw, fled with his following and settled at Aswo'. There he built a monastery and our author was installed therein. In the hurry of getting away from Pegu, the books had been left behind, and when the boys were sent to the monastery to be taught their letters there were no books. The monk was a man of resource, however, and at once set himself to the task of making them. His first, as he tells us in an introduction to it, was the *Lokasiddhi*. This we may well suppose he wrote largely from memory whilst making it conform to his own literary style. There would be nothing wonderful in doing this, since its rules and sayings were no doubt in use then, as they are now, for guidance in the ordinary affairs of life. Like other works intended for memorising, it is in verse and a Talaing will often be able to repeat to you almost any passage from memory. Reference has been made to it in earlier chapters. Another little work, also printed, which would probably be written about this time, is *Lik Blāi Bhā*, 'The Schoolboy's Book.' It urges the pupil to diligence in his studies and, by a few well chosen incidents, shows the real importance of learning.

The flight from Pegu was in 1740 and twenty years later he wrote his history of Pegu. A version of the *Maṅgalasutta* by this author, a copy of which is catalogued with the manuscripts at the Bernard Free Library, Rangoon, is dated 1130 (A.D. 1768). He must have been writing for a number of years after this even, for it was

in his seventy-third year that he wrote a translation of a very popular Burmese work entitled *Paramī Khan*. He had been seventeen years in the priesthood in 1740, which would make his age about thirty-seven. He was thus writing for some thirty-five years that we can account for. This literary activity is quite in accordance with the reputation he has among the Talaings. They very commonly credit the Monk of Aswo' with writing all the books. He is the reputed author of a collection called *Wañ Dacit*, 'The Nine Vamsas.' This includes Buddha Wañ, Dhatuwañ, Mahawañ and Rajawañ. He is, besides, the author of a number of other popular works, such as the *Maṅgalasutta* above mentioned and the *Dhammasat*, or law book. Mr. Blagden has seen a didactical work by this author in the British Museum. It is not, however, always possible to determine the authorship. Sometimes the copy seems complete and no author is named, at other times the beginning or end has been lost and so one is deprived of some of the most interesting particulars.

Under the article *Paramī* in Judson's Burmese-English Dictionary (edition 1893) *Paramī Khan* is described as "a poetical work in ten parts written by Shin-thila-wun-tha of Taungdwingyi, Upper Burma, in which is extolled the exertions made by Gaudama, the Buddha, in attaining the fulfilment of the ten cardinal virtues when a Bodhisat." The quotation there given affords a good idea of the scope of the work. The Talaing author tells us that in Sagaing in the province of Ava, where there were many literary men, an attempt was made to write a Talaing version. The difficulties of translation were so great, however, that the attempt was given up and the book sent on to Pegu for the Monk of Aswo' to translate. He has allowed himself considerable latitude in reproducing the Burmese author, according to his own confession. This by the way shows a greater interest in the Talaing language amongst the scholars of Upper Burma than one would expect, when one hears of the efforts of the Burmese government to stamp out the Talaing tongue. The date of the work

is in fact the year of the death of Sinbyushin. It will be remembered that this king had given special encouragement to literature, sending an embassy to Benares to invite learned Brahmans to come and stay at the Burmese capital. It may be that the scholar monks of Sagaing were anxious that the Talaings should share in the intellectual good things that were coming their way.

The catalogue of Talaing manuscripts in the Bernard Free Library at Rangoon, kindly lent me by Prof. Duroiselle, the former curator, gives a list of 304 works. Some are no doubt duplicates, whilst others give various translations of the same work. These palm-leaf manuscripts vary in size from 485 leaves to a few pages. Many of them are incomplete and some are mere fragments. The dates too vary somewhat. The earliest indicated is 1017 (A.D. 1655) and even that is a copyist's date. The latest date given is 1200, equal to A.D. 1838. The dates are sometimes copyists' and sometimes original authors'. Thus, in the five manuscripts attributed to the Monk of Aswo', we find a Sutta dated 1130 (A.D. 1768) which was in the author's lifetime, whereas another is dated 1166 (A.D. 1804), this being given as the copyist's date. Old age was creeping upon him in 1776 and he was not likely to be writing nearly thirty years later.

Of these manuscripts 190 deal directly with the Tripitaka and either give the Pali text or a Talaing translation, usually a kind of word for word translation of the Pali. Sometimes the work is given in full and sometimes it is simply an epitome. In some Talaing books the Pali text is cited only of passages in which the Buddha is the speaker. A word for word translation follows and then a clear translation of the passage is given. The narrative connecting the speeches of the Buddha is given only in translation. This is the style of the *Milinda Pañha*.

There are four Dhammasat works in the list and one of them is in Pali. Two by the Monk of Aswo' are probably copies of the same work. They are both

incomplete. I have only been able to examine one copy of a Talaing Dhammasat, but in that the first leaf was missing and there was no indication of authorship. It more nearly corresponds with the Burmese Dhammasat which was before Sangermano than any other I have seen described. Not any of those discussed by Forchhammer in the *Jardine Prize Essay* seems quite to tally with it. Like Sangermano's it is in ten books. A rather striking thing about this work is the use of the word *aplet* in the sense of 'offence,' 'guilt,' 'crime.' In modern Talaing the Indian loan word *dus*, written *duh*, takes that place. *Aplet* on the other hand seems to connect with the Burmese *aprac*, pronounced *apyit*, thus suggesting a possible translation from the Burmese. It occurs regularly, however, in the older books. The Burmese *pru* (pyu), 'to do,' 'to make,' was originally *plo*, and in the same way the modern *apyit* may be from this original *aplet*. There are many words in the older Talaing books which point back to earlier associations of the two languages.

Five works of a medical nature appear on the list. These are all on separate subjects of the kind that a medical man is supposed to understand. Three of them, however, are fragmentary. The various departments of medical knowledge are well brought together in the medical book printed at Paklat. It is in fact evidently a compilation by a present-day Talaing of extant works on the subject. The first part is headed *Roganidānakathā*, 'On the Causes of Disease,' and discusses the origin of the various diseases and their symptoms. The important thing to begin with is the diagnosis. The second part is styled *Tabyagun*, 'Celestial attributes.' The properties of the various medicinal substances, animal, vegetable and mineral, are fully shown. This is the *materia medica* of the Talaings. A third part is styled *Gran-ga'ūy*, 'Book of Medicine,' the pharmacopœia of the Talaings. This is the book of recipes or prescriptions. These are followed by a few mantras, examples of which have been given in a former chapter. This pretty much covers the ground of the five books in the Rangoon catalogue.



The history group contains only five works. One of these is the *Gavamṇāṭi* in Pali. Its date is 1135 (A.D. 1773). The Talaing versions are probably older than that. The *Dhatuwañ* appears twice, both incomplete, and one a mere fragment. The more complete one is dated 1200 which must be a copyist's date. An incomplete copy of the Anjunān from the Indian Epic, *Mahabharata*, is included.

A number of Talaing manuscripts are preserved in the National Library at Bangkok, among them being a very complete version of the well-known *Milinda Pañha*. The Ethnological Museum in Berlin, too, has a good collection, procured in Siam. Mr. Blagden, who has examined them, says they are mostly translations from the Pali after the manner described above.

Talaing books on palm leaf are to be found in most Talaing monasteries, both in Burma and in Siam. In some there are better collections than in others. These were originally collected by scholars interested in books. The trouble now is that in many cases these scholars have been succeeded by monks who do not appreciate learning to the same extent and the books are either being scattered about or are going to ruin for want of proper care. In some cases where there are still large collections, the want of scholarship makes them a dead letter.

*Lik Smin Asaḥ* is a good example of a more strictly imaginative work. It is in verse and is quite a work of art. It was written in Burma after the Talaing emigrations to Siam and is apparently not current in that country. Its date is 1187 (A.D. 1825). The author, an old monk of seventy years of age, explains in his introduction that there had been an original Talaing work of the same name which was now lost. The Burmese had the story in their theatrical plays and it was current in the bazaar, but he designed the restoration of the Talaing setting for Talaing readers.

The story begins with the founding of Pegu. Reference is first made to a prophecy of the Buddha, when on an

aerial flight in that region, that on the spot where two swans had alighted on a bank of sand, a great city would yet be built. The land had gradually emerged from the water. The prophecy had been kept in mind and a king of Vijayanagara in South India had sent a party of his people to take possession. It was, however, still too early to think of founding a city and they retired after burying a post to mark their claim.

The scene then changes to the forest near Thatôn and the story of Loma, the hermit, is told as already related in the chapter on History. In the poem it is, of course, very much amplified.

The story of the twin brothers having been told, the reader is again taken back in imagination to Pegu. The land has now sufficiently emerged from the sea for the building of a city on the spot, but the Indians have returned and the story of the intervention of Indra on behalf of the brothers is again very fully told. Pegu is founded and a glowing description of its glories is given, though no doubt descriptive rather of the new capital of Bureng Naung than of the original foundation. Samala, the elder brother, becomes king and sends his younger brother Wimala to school at Benares, as it would appear, though Takkasila is the name given.

The scene again changes and we are carried off to a clearing in the Karen jungle where an old couple cultivate the usual hill crop and have a few gourds growing about the hut. One of these gourds bore a wonderful pumpkin of which the old couple were very proud and on which they bestowed every care. One day, on returning from the usual round in the clearing, they found their meal mysteriously prepared for them. After some measure of doubt and some cautious trial they found the food all right and determined to solve the mystery. Plung Thaw was to watch the first day, whilst his wife went to work in the clearing. He, however, went to sleep and missed everything. Ying Paw, his wife, scolded him heartily and decided to watch herself next day. She was more successful and folded to her motherly

bosom a beautiful maiden, the gift of the golden pumpkin, as the yellow pumpkin is called in Burma. She thereby gets the name of Suwannā "the golden." The report of her beauty spreads abroad and reaches the ears of King Samala. He comes and makes love to her in a kind of elegiac verse, which reminds one of the lovelorn laments of former-day English poetry. He points out to her that so great is his love for her that he has come on the foot conveyance, *yān padā*. The old couple flee with her, but are overtaken and carried to the capital, where she is made chief queen and the old man becomes a noble of the land.

We are now taken back to Wimala, who returns from school to claim his brother's promise to give him an interest in the kingdom. There are some quite realistic touches in the poem. He is said to make the return journey to Pegu in fifteen days. He finds the king too much engrossed in his new-found love to have any recollection of his former promise, and determines to accomplish his death. The king learning his doom makes his lament in the abovementioned elegiac verse. Samala dies by his brother's hand and Wimala makes his sister-in-law his queen, but banishes her infant son, his own nephew. The queen, with a lady-in-waiting, takes the babe into the country and leaves it near a herd of buffaloes. An old buffalo cow suckles the abandoned infant and he is brought up among the herd and grows up an athletic young man. The Indians have again returned to the attack on Pegu and destruction seems imminent. Asaḥ Kummā is induced to return to the capital and saves the situation by overcoming the Indian Goliath in single combat. He is restored to his place in the palace and the poem ends with the death of the buffalo cow who has followed her foster son.

This Asaḥ Kummā became the third king of Pegu and his name Smin Asaḥ gives the title to the poem.

*Lokavidū* is the cosmography of the Talaings. It gives the ordinary Indian conception of the universe. Mount Meru, called T'ma' Sinnarāt, stands in the centre. Round

it are four great islands—north, east, south and west. Ours is the southern island and is called Jambudīp. The sun revolves round Sīnnarāt, and when it is over the eastern island it is sunrise with us; when directly over Jambudīp, it is of course midday; when right over the western island it is sunset with us, and when right over the northern island it is midnight here. There are seven great concentric circles of rock or mountain round Meru. The nearest one is named Yugandhara and is most often mentioned. It is usually referred to as a mountain. Over these are the heavens, the six devalokas called *Swaw tarau*. The nearest one is Tavatīmśa, Indra's heaven. Over these again are the brahmalokas termed simply *bruim*. There are said to be five great rivers, originally the five rivers of northern India, beginning with the Ganges and Jumna. In Talaing *Gaṅgā* is used of the sea or any great water.

*Mūla Mūli* gives the cosmogony of the Talaings. In the beginning all was chaos. There were first the two seasons, then wind, then water. The hot season brought forth the earth and the winter made the vapours and the dews. Then came the rains.

After the appearance of the earth came the minerals. Before the plants appeared there was the green substance that forms on things long wet. From that was formed the various grasses. Plant life progressed until the forest trees appeared.

Of the animals there were first the worms, maggots and insects. These were the things having no bones. After a long spell, animals with bones came into being, but at first the bodies were no larger than a jujube. The bones were the size of a very small blade of grass. There were no full-blooded animals yet. These passed through countless transmigrations. There was no knowledge of time.

After a long while a woman appeared. Her name was *Itthaṅgeyasāṅgāsī*. She fed on the perfume of flowers. By this time the earth was filled with trees, bamboos, canes and grasses, and it was difficult to find a place

on the earth to lie down or sit. She decided to make figures. Taking earth and moisture she formed a man and a woman, and of various animals, two and two, male and female, she formed figures. In each she created an insect and so gave them life. She then gave them names. When she saw them make the different movements, she said what it was, and this was the beginning of speech which has been handed down. From that time numerous creatures came into being both on land and in the water. There were more than nine hundred thousand on land and seven hundred millions in water. Time was not yet, but, if you count by the years of the exalted Lord, it was eighty-four thousand kalpas. Because the woman could proceed no further a man came into being; he was called Puṃsaṅgeyasāṅgasi. He looked around and saw that all creatures were mated and went in search of a mate. When he had found the woman, she asked him why he had come to seek her, and he told her he wished to take her as his consort. She consented provided he could solve for her the puzzle of the ever-recurring births. After due reflection he said it all came of the three kinds or genders and the four elements and that things would go on until one was sufficiently endued with wisdom to work out the salvation of the race. He presented her with four proper things, and they made three figures, male, female and sexless. Earth gave them mind or memory; fire, strength; water, form and beauty; and wind, spiritual power. Afterwards, the three grew thin and emaciated, and the creator pair deliberating, had them eat rice and they became stout again. There was no moon to know time by. The two then formed a monster elephant forty-nine yojanas long and placed it in the ocean with Mount Meru on its back. Mount Meru was seven hundred and twenty thousand yojanas under the water and the same above the water. They created the zodiacal signs, the lunar mansions and the sun and moon. The sun going through one sign makes a month, through twelve a year. The moon circling through the twelve signs gave thirty

days, that is, a month. They then formed Yugandhara, the four Maharajas and the Tavatimsa heaven.

Of the three kinds of people already mentioned were born three children. When Puñliñ, the male, died, Itthiliñ, the female, mourned for him and went every day to place food at his grave. When the body had decayed, she planted a post and continued to go. When Napuñ, the sexless, died she did nothing at all and the children asked the reason. She replied that she loved the one and not the other. Again, when the woman in her turn died, the three children split a post and set up the three sections and carried food to the place. The three children grew up and thirteen children were born to them, six female and seven male. The children had animals to play with [the names of twelve only are given], the names of which are the names of the guardians of the years.

It was noticed that sickness had entered the world and the two made the eight planets to keep men from terror.

[Here there seems something like confusion in the narrative. The story of the three persons and the thirteen children seems to be repeated in a slightly different form. The love between the sexes is again set forth. In the absence of doctors, the treatment of disease by bringing various animals to the sick according to age is mentioned.]

People now lived in unison and died without estrangement. Afterward, however, men began to take life and there was no one to teach them of good and evil. Itthañgeyasaṅgaṣi and Puṇsañgeyasaṅgaṣi decide to create mind and then there was difference of disposition. Quarrelling ensued and people began to separate and form different communities. Sin made the punishment of Nirayo. Still there was no knowledge of good and evil.

A young man of high birth, whose parents had died and whose relatives had driven him out, went to the forest and fell with his face to the ground under a tree. He remained just like a monk at meditation and did not allow

even the insects to disturb his tranquility. He found out what was merit and what offence. The people gave him food. He had no troubles. When he died he became the deva of the tree—*Chu Kwah* (Thingan). This was the first deva. The second deva was a young woman whose name is not evident, but by befriending a blind man she became a female deva with the name *Mūladhikā*.

When the world was wicked the original pair decided to cause a conflagration and so give people a chance of gaining merit in a future world. When the destruction was imminent, people began to have mercy toward one another, and by that they reached the brahmalokas which had just been formed. This was the first kalpa and it was called *Titara-watthu Kaw*.

When the world again became habitable, its people came back, that is, they died in the Brahma world and were reborn in this world.

Afterwards there were innumerable worlds. The first deva was reborn in many kalpas and afterwards was born into the Brahma kalpa. As a boy in the cold season he found wood for his parents and elders to warm themselves and water to bathe and drink. In the rainy season he built them houses and formed bridges where it was difficult for them to walk. When he died he was born in the *Tavatimsa* heaven where he became *Indra*, and four female heavenly ministrants became his consorts.

After innumerable kalpas, there was one in which people spoke as we speak now, but still there was no knowledge of good and evil. One man went to the woods and kept the five precepts and was reborn in the Brahma world. He was named *Mahawirasaddhabruim*.

After the lapse of many kalpas *Mahawirasaddhabruim* and *Devadhika*, coming down from the heavenly realm, become man and wife and have two children. Leaving their children, they go into the woods and taking separate ways become ascetics. But there was as yet no knowledge of good and evil and no letters or periods by which to learn the meditations. They could only lessen passion somewhat.

Again, after a long lapse of time, the first deva became a wonderful child who spoke when he was born. At seven he renounced the world and, after thirteen years of aceticism, became a Paccekabuddha. He finds Mūladhitā who has lost her husband. He shows her that there is no good in grieving for her husband who has become a crab and has other likings. The woman becomes a Paccekabuddha. She wishes to return and comfort her children but decides to wait. The two children wander to a village near the sea in search of their mother. Seeing an appearance on the spire of the prasāda of the cakkavala king they desire to visit it. Later their mother, the Paccekabuddha, comes to them, and after they have suitably revered her they are transported to the regions of bliss. There was always at least one Paccekabuddha to a kalpa, sometimes more.

Wudhibhutā Kummā, who in a former existence had looked upon life with indifference, was the son of a king and enjoyed every advantage of royalty. He had innumerable women to minister to his every movement. But he would leave all to keep the sila. Keeping the sila gains heaven, the happiness of which is more than one hundred times one thousand times the happiness of earth. A great multitude was sent to keep sila with him.

In a future kalpa he was the son of a Brahman and was named Wisudhimetta Kummā. He refused his mother's milk because it made defilement in him and darkened his way to Nirvana. The devas brought him heavenly milk. At the age of sixteen he renounced family life to become an ascetic. He assiduously practised the ecstatic meditation but was not privileged to become a Buddha.

After the lapse of many kalpas, he became the son of a wealthy person. At that time there were various forms of privation and disease. Any afflicted person taking the child in his arms was restored. The relatives therefore named him Niroga-jana-kummā. When he grew up he wished to become an ascetic, but on account



of the importunities of the sick folks he remained among them and was only able to keep the five precepts.

Afterwards, he was reborn a prince, and because the beasts and trees could speak the language of men, he was called Tikkha-kummā. He increased and grew, and when four thousand years of age he renounced family life and became a monk. He lived the ascetic life under twenty-five different trees for five thousand years. He attained enlightenment and men and devas came to see the wonder of it and asked him to preach. He thought at first to tell about the beginnings of things but decided afterwards to teach the alphabet first. He made persons of the hundred and one different languages take slates and pencils and write it down to his dictation according to their own ideas as to form. The letters became the doctrine of the Tripitaka and men learned the truth and entered the four paths which lead to Nirvana.

At that time the original pair, Itthaṅgeyaśaṅgasi and Punaṅgeyaśaṅgasi, had been reborn into the world and were again man and wife. They saw the refulgence of the Buddha and worshipped him. They then questioned the Buddha concerning themselves and he told them that they had become husband and wife because the man solved the woman's puzzle. They had been the means of bringing the people of the world into existence and of their continued progress which had culminated in the coming of a Buddha.

## APPENDIX.

### A KALOK DANCE.

[From a paper by the compiler published in *The Burma Research Society's Journal*.]

It is time, however, to turn to the description of the dance. Certain points in the cult will emerge as we proceed. I am going to describe an actual dance which I took the trouble to see through to the end. The dance began about nine o'clock in the morning and lasted till five in the evening, and things were kept going all the time except for a short interval for dinner between one and two. I have a list which I will here give of thirty-two different items in the programme, some taking longer and some shorter time.

#### KALOK DANCE AT KWÂN LAMÂN (POTTER'S VILLAGE) ON THE MEKLAUNG, SIAM.

1. Doñ dances and makes an offering.
2. The kalok requisites brought out.
  - (i) Examination.
  - (ii) Pouring of water.
3. The first dance by the women. The second queen.
4. Caging the kalok.
5. Doñ walks the woods.
6. Cutting the plantain tree. *Plen antarāai* (releasing the misery).
7. Ceremonial bathing of the sept.
  - (i) Bathing the offspring.
  - (ii) Bathing the stem.

8. The second dance. The chief queen.
9. Dancing the kalok.
10. The kalok becomes a monk.
11. Lighting the candle of witness.
12. Doñ dances to put the kaloks on an equal footing.
13. Two women dance in character of men.
14. Dance by three women.
15. Another dance by two women.
16. Another dance by one woman.
17. Biting the fish.
18. Playing the young Indian Prince.
19. Eating the fish.

[Interval for dinner.]

20. Kalok eats sticky rice and jaggery.
21. The Tavoyan kalok.
22. The Karen kaloks.
23. Dance for the householder.
24. Fighting the game cocks and catching the elephant.
25. The kalok of the north.
26. Eating the tortoise.
27. Dance of the *kalok sñi*.
28. Returning the cords.
29. Breaking the cocoanuts.
30. Playing the *bau ju*.
31. Floating the canoe.
32. Gathering the offspring and examining the candle.

The kalok dance is usually the result of a vow or promise made when a member of the family is sick and an appeal is made to the kalok. Briefly the appeal is in these words: *kalok tala sñi kuiw blah yai ñi ai leh kuiw puiai weñ gruiñ pa miñ suñ arak ca kwān*, 'Oh, spirit lord of our house, give relief from the sickness, and I will institute a dance in your honour. We will laugh and play, and make rejoicing in drinking and eating.' In the case before us the patient had died, but the promise was held binding.

The dance is called *lehkanā*, a dance in a pavilion,' or *leh kalok*, 'dancing the kalok.' ကာကော or ကော is the equivalent of the Pali *mandapam* (Bur. မဏ္ဍပ). The *kanā* is of oblong shape with the roof coming down on four sides. At the dance I am describing the centre of the roof was raised a little. The doorway is toward the west and is partly in the roof, the latter being somewhat low. The door of bamboo and leaf is opened upward and being supported by two bamboo poles gives the appearance of a vestibule or porch. There are no walls and entrance may be made anywhere. The actors in the various scenes, however, enter and leave by the door. In the centre is a raised platform for the dancers with a canopy. Just behind that and much higher is a rack of bamboo framework which is used to place the various offerings after the regular dancing has commenced. The musicians are seated on mats on the right of the platform. The vestments are kept in a basket on the left. The women folks with their children also sit there on mats ready to hand things and render any assistance.

The presiding genius of the day's doings is the *doñ*, or medium representing the kalok and knowing all the requirements. In this case the *doñ* was an elderly female. She introduced all the business and started the dancers and was on duty the whole day. A male *doñ* from another village happened to be passing and coming forward entered the *kanā* and sat down on the platform beside the presiding *doñ*, remaining there and partly assisting for some time. He afterwards begged leave to go on his way, making the excuse that he had to attend to some business of his own. There seems thus a fraternity recognised amongst the *doñs*.

Another important personage is *acā bāt*, the leader of the orchestra. He shares with the *doñ* a knowledge of all the requisites for the dance. He has to understand the changes necessary in the character of the music as the dance proceeds. He seemed to play on any instrument as need arose. He takes his designation from ကော (Sans. *ācārya*), 'teacher,' and ဗာတ် (*bāt*), 'a

musical instrument.' The instruments are *bāt kon cah*, an arrangement of ten gongs in almost circular frame standing upright; ၪၢၢၢၢၢၢၢၢ, a low box with ends gradually rising from the centre and having a graduated series of bamboo slats fastened to two parallel cords along its length; four drums (*pham*) of different sizes; a clarionet (*haw*); and small cymbals ၢၢၢၢၢၢ. Bamboo clappers (*kaḥa*) are used, but these are played by any one apparently.


As soon as I heard the music begin I stepped from my boat and made my way to the place. The *doñ* was dancing in front of the booth with a sword in each hand. She afterwards took up a little offering in plantain leaf and carrying it forth threw it away. This apparently was the opening ceremony.

The next item was the bringing forth from the house of the *apot kalok*, or *kalok* requisites. The old woman of the house addressing the *doñ* said: "See, they are all new; look and see that everything is there." On a brass tray were a number of fresh clean garments neatly folded and on the top of all was a gold ring set with rubies. On the top of these were now placed a large candle and a garland of flowers. The families were called in and the males, men and boys, came forward and held up the tray whilst the *doñ* poured underneath first water, then the liquid from a cocoanut and afterwards some spirits, repeating some words the while. It was impossible to hear the words for the music and noise, no one seems interested in what is said. Then a collection of foods was held up and water dropped all round from a cup formed of plantain leaf. An old woman afterwards distributed the eatables amongst the boys.

Preparations were now made for the actual dancing of the *kalok*. The trays and dishes containing cakes, plantains, cocoanuts and other articles for use during the day had hitherto lain on the dancing platform. These were now put on the rack behind ready to be taken down when needed.

For the first dance a woman entered and was dressed up in old-fashioned garments kept for the purpose. These consist of the old stylé ganin, or skirt open up one side still to be seen in Burma when old women are dressed for special occasions, and scarves for throwing over the shoulders. For the dance the ganin is fastened with a band at the waist and scarves are loosely thrown over the shoulders. These garments are put on over the ordinary clothing, and are always in the pattern brought over by their forebears from Burma. This woman was taking the part of *gana kyāk dot*, 'the second queen.' At first she postured and made slow movements with hands and arms in imitation of the doñ. Then she became more lively in movements and seemed quite excited. This is the stage when it is said *kalok lup*, 'a spirit has taken possession.' The doñ now stops, her own movements and hands the woman first two bunches of leaves, then two shields and lastly two swords. These the woman brandishes as she dances and then hands back to the doñ. She continues to dance with free hands and the doñ has leisure to rest or make preparations for the next matter in hand.

The next item was the caging of the kalok, the brass tray on which the kalok vestments had been presented was now placed in a garment slung from a pole in the way in which a baby is cradled. The tray contained the looking glass, the comb and the tail of false hair. This I was told was caging the kalok, *kruñ kalok*, who had been brought from the house and was now to be here all the time of the dancing.

The doñ then strutted forth with sword and horn to walk the forest. The forest is represented by a branch of the eugenia tree, *knānkreni*, the Burmese  stuck in the ground outside the shed opposite the door. She first kneeled before the tree and placed a small offering of food on plantain leaf. All round the offering she poured water by simply allowing it to drop from the small end of the horn which was perforated. She then rose and went round the tree three times

keeping it on her left (*dakṣina*, cf. page 64), plucking a leaf and putting it into her horn each round.

The cutting of the plantain tree was the next item. A young plantain entire with root part and crown of leaves was brought into the booth carried in a horizontal position with the leaf end first. All the males pertaining to the *kalok* had to bear a hand in carrying it in, whilst the *doñ* held it at the leaf end walking first. It was laid on the dancing platform and one of the men proceeded to shave the head or root part which just extended over the platform, the shavings dropping into a brass tray below. The *doñ* then put some powdered saffron on the head and pouring water over it rubbed with her hand as in bathing. All the males put forth a hand in turn and helped. Next the *doñ* took some parched rice and throwing it down the males all took it up in handfuls and threw it toward the plantain stalk. The *doñ* then made little incisions in the stem with a sword cutting toward the top every time until she reached the leaves, when she turned and made an incision in the direction of the head. One of the men was now instructed to cut the stalk into pieces at the places marked by the *doñ*. This plantain stem was to represent the dead on whose account the dance was made, and the rite is termed *plen antarāai*, 'releasing the misery.'

The rite which followed next was rather interesting and was apparently an essential part of the procedure. This was the ceremonial bathing of the sept. First there was the 'bathing of the offspring' (*baluip kon cau*). A jar of water was placed by the *eugenia* branch outside, and the old woman who was giving the feast sat down beside it with a dipper. All the members of the different families, first men and boys and then women and girls, came in turn and held out their hands whilst the old woman poured water to wash them. As each completed his or her hand washing the *doñ* stood by and slipped a ring of cord on the right hand.\* Some of the

\* This cord is called *juk paruit*, 'a string of defence, a charmed thread.' Pali *parittasuttam*.

little boys had it slipped over their heads and wore it on their necks, whilst the others wore it on the wrist. This was to distinguish them throughout the day as members of the sept. Then the old woman had water poured over her body and had a bath in the usual Eastern way. This was called *baluip bo' kalok*, 'bathing the stem of the kalok.' Whilst the bathing was going on two women stood at the entrance to the booth holding a silk scarf stretched between them, apparently as a screen. The old woman having changed into dry garments was robed as the chief queen (*gana kyäk jnok*).

For the dance of the chief queen the *doñ* arranges foods—cakes and plantains—in two little bowls and a plantain leaf. A candle is lighted and stuck in the latter and water poured round the leaf. Then she transfers the candle to one of the bowls and pours water round the whole three. Having done this she blows out the candle and folding up the leaf places it under a corner of the mat which covers the platform. The two dishes were placed near on the mat. She then takes a folded yellow cloth with a large candle and a garland of flowers and waves them before the old woman three times, the articles being circled round the rack each time. The old woman is then made to swing a basket containing the articles together with a plantain leaf and bamboo stick, holding by the supporting cord (*juk palai*) a cloth hanging from the roof by which the dancers support themselves in falling before the *doñ* at the end of a dance. The old woman then takes the basket on her palm with the end of the supporting cord underneath, moving it about and swaying the body. She afterwards dances in the usual way with leaves and shields and swords. The music becomes lively and the old woman responds to it.

The old woman again puts off her queenly robe and is attired in the *kalok* garments. Offerings are again prepared by the *doñ*. The outstanding feature of this item is the raising of two brass trays, a big and a little one, each in turn three times, the *doñ* transferring the



looking glass and comb from the one to the other as she hands them to the woman. Then the dance as before. The old woman is not, however, finished yet by any means. The *doñ* takes a bowl with lighted candles and passing them over the rack gives them to the old woman, who stands up to take them and sways about. Then she receives in turn the tray and the betel box in the same way. This is followed by another dance in which a spear is added to the other weapons.

The old woman again changes and dresses for the part of the *kalok* becoming a monk. There is not much in the part that resembles monkhood at all. She first holds on by the supporting cord, then swings the swing (*lahuai jun jā*). The *jun jā* is a brass tray hung in a cloth. She takes from the *doñ* a water basin and removing the monkish robe (*rām tit*) takes to weapons and dances with swords.

The candle of witness (*pnān tuiñ* or *pnān saksī*) was now lighted. A tray with cocoanut, plantains, cakes and spirits was taken and little candles lighted on its edge. A large candle was made ready by sticking it into a small chatty filled with cleaned rice. The *doñ* waved the tray before the old woman, who still retained her place on the platform, lighted the large candle and passed the tray over to the musicians, who divided its contents amongst themselves. The lighted candle was then placed on the rack and guarded from the wind by a casing of plantain stalk laced with rattan.

The *kaloks*, or ghosts of the ancestors of the sept, were now said to be all present, and the next item was a dance by the *doñ* to put all on an equal footing. This is called *leh pñū kalok gamluiñ* and apparently means that the ghosts are all given an equal opportunity of taking possession of the dancers and so showing their continued interest in the living. One woman dancing later hopped and skipped out into the open and, going up to the old lady who was giving the feast, hugged and kissed her. This was an indication that the ghost was that of the dead husband. Another was

recognized by some of the men as an uncle. Some of these single dances are done quite gracefully. It is not all a swaying of the body and wreathing of the limbs as in the ordinary Burmese and Siamese dancing. There is hopping and skipping and moving about and sometimes the skipping is very graceful. When coupled with the lively music I can quite understand spectators entering into some kind of enjoyment of it. And yet there is little evidence of people being there for mere enjoyment. The doñ's movements when dancing with the spear on this occasion were specially good. She held it up with her two hands, its point being towards the rack with candle and offering. With one hand she held the shaft and with the other the blade covered with a cloth. She changed it from side to side by passing it over her head.

The next dance was by two women in the character of men. They simply fastened a loin cloth male fashion over their two garments. This caused one of the men sitting by to remark that whilst the kalok followed only the male line, it always fell to the women to do the dancing.

Several dances now took place in which one, two or three women engaged. The doñ always commenced by preparing a little offering and pouring out spirits, and sometimes smelling the offerings. The doñ postured and made movements which the women imitated as best they could. The doñ seemed to exercise some kind of magnetic influence. I saw a woman, one of three, who seemed fascinated. Then she took her gaze away from the doñ and looked as if she would shake herself free, but she again turned to the doñ and soon was in a tremor; finally springing to her feet she began to dance. Some remained cool and collected and never gave way to the frenzy, others again after dancing in a frenzied state for a while went out and brought in others. These they sought to excite by moving their arms about and causing them to hop and skip. Some became excited like the other dancers and danced away till the excitement

wore out. Others again were unmoved and just fell out again when they were left free. Sometimes there were eight, nine, or ten dancing all at once, though never more than three started the dance. On finishing dancers always danced into the booth and ended by grasping the supporting cord and falling down before the *doñ*. One woman sprang up again and danced madly until an old dame sought to quiet her, and managed only by forcing her to her knees before the *doñ* and holding her down for a little. This excitement is one of the strangest things about the dance. The dancers most susceptible to it seem held in thrall for the time being, yet the *doñ* shows no sign of exerting any power over them.

A curious thing in the day's proceedings is the biting of the fish. A fish with a stick through its length, having been roasted on the coals, was brought to the *doñ*, who having smelled it examined it and called for some one to bite it. The men were all called afterwards and each was told to take a bite of the fish in turn. Some simply broke off a piece with the teeth and threw it down. It did not seem necessary to eat it.

In the next turn, *weñ smin blāai galā*, 'playing the young Indian Prince,' two little fishes are used. The *doñ* herself dances in the character of the prince wearing a loin cloth male fashion over her own dress. One of the men of the sept comes forward to the platform and kneeling on the ground holds up a basin containing an offering before the *doñ*, who after throwing a folded cloth over the man's arms takes two little fishes from the basin and sticks them on the points of her two swords. She flourishes them and then taking off the fishes puts them down again. She then takes a sword in one hand and a comb of plantains in the other, and having flourished these puts them down and afterwards dances. Next she goes out as the prince to meet his lover, and having found her in the forest, the two pledge faith by pouring water, and return home, that is, enter the booth. Here there is more pouring

of water with the sprinkling of the body, manipulation of the large and small tray as in a former item, the kalok things returned to the cage and the woman playing the princess dances in the usual way.

The doñ next performs the ceremony of eating the fish. She prepares a tray with cakes, etc., and a bigger fish. The music begins and she postures seated and again holds the two little fishes. She smells the fishes, then the cakes and things on the tray. Next she stands up and dances flourishing the swords and the music quickens. She afterwards removes everything from the tray except the fishes, veils her face and head, and going through the ceremony of eating the fish behind her veil, finishes dancing.

In the next item, *kalok ca kamleñ kuiwkaw*, 'the kalok eats sticky rice with jaggery,' a woman dances in the usual way and then coming down from the platform with a tray in her hand goes about stuffing the children's mouths with the rice dipped in jaggery, *ñah phyuim kon cau ñah*, 'she feeds her grandchildren.' She is an ancestor interested in her progeny.

There was nothing out of the usual about the Tavoyan kalok, but with the Karen kaloks it was different. As the Karens are jungle people this dance could not take place in the pavilion. So three women having dressed in the character fared forth to the woods, one carrying a small basket of the Karen pattern, another water in a joint of bamboo, and the third carrying two swords. The first woman whose basket\* was filled with little cakes and other edibles went round feeding the people, the doñ coming out to help by dividing out and refilling the basket. Silver bracelets were now brought and clasped on the wrists of the dancers, one of whom was now greatly excited and it was with difficulty the bracelets were put on at all. This was the longest drawn out of all the dances, eight or nine dancing all at one time.

\* The Karens are noted for their ungrudging hospitality and this may allude to it.

This and the next were the most exciting performances of the day.

The next was a dance on behalf of the old dame who gave the feast. Two women commencing in the usual way by and by dance out bearing trays, and distribute cakes among the people. One of them being herself greatly excited brings others in and soon there are nine or ten all dancing at once.

In fighting the game cocks two women holding cloths knotted to represent cocks commence in the usual way and afterwards dance out into the open. Here a man bribed with promises of drinks comes into the arena and capers about. Bottles filled with country spirit were handed about, and always as he stopped to take a drink the two women came at him trying to catch him. This was *bak cin*, 'hunting the elephant.' They eventually caught him by throwing their scarves over his head and leading him to the eugenia tree.

The rite of eating the tortoise is a reminder of one of the peculiar traditions of the Talaings.\* It was reported that this particular tortoise was not sufficiently cooked, but it was ordered out just as it was. It was brought in a plate, shell and all, and placed before the *doñ*. Two women sat in front in the dancer's place. The *doñ* poured water and poked at the flesh and smelled it. The tortoise was then raised up and formally offered to the *kalok sñi*. It was then taken back to the house and would be eaten later, I understand. One of the women now carried two combs of plantains on a stick over her shoulder, whilst the other carried two swords and the *doñ* grasped the spear. The two women then danced in the usual way.

In the dance of the *kalok sñi* the old woman of the house again took the part. She dressed for it in a *putso* (glik). It was somewhat scant in width, but it was put on in the usual way with the free end drawn round the shoulders. The *doñ* prepared a basin of parched

\* See pages 102—105.

rice with candles burning. This basin was afterwards overturned and the rice spilled out. This was called *pa bakap kamleñ*, 'performing the overturning of the sticky rice.' The two old dames then sat down to a game of *gane'* (*weñ gane'*). The *gane'* (Bur. ခနဲညှင်း) were little pieces of plantain fruit. These the two simply threw to one another.

It was getting near the end now and all were called in to give up their cords, the *don* taking them back.

The remaining items were performed outside the booth. Breaking the cocoanuts and playing the *bau ju*, or guardian spirit of the village, seemed pretty much mixed up. Two women danced, and the two cocoanuts being laid near, one of the women by and by took up one, smashing it on the other as it lay on a plank. The little boys rushed in to seize the pieces, but the woman took up the remaining whole one and raising it up brought it down with a smash on the plank. The boys then scrambled for the fragments.

Floating the canoe was the last item really. A model of a canoe was made on the spot of plantain stalk and placed with other things in a tray. A youth stood by with a bamboo pole, a sun hat and a jacket. Whether this was intended to symbolise the desire of these exiles to return to the land of their fathers I do not know, but that was about the way they put it to me.

Examining the candle does not appear to be any real part of the rites, but it seems to be expected, and the prospects for the year are held to be indicated by the way in which the candle burns down on the grains of rice. The leader of the orchestra it was who read the signs. The pot of uncooked rice in which the candle had burned was handed down to him. He looked at it earnestly for some time and then said that it would be a fairly good year. Any work or business undertaken to the east, the west, or the north would be successful, but toward the south it would not be so. As far as I could see this was said because the grains of rice around had been evenly scorched when the candle burned low

except in the one direction indicating the south. A little stick marked the west.

A good deal of country spirits was used during the day and a great many cocoanuts were opened for the water they contained. As it is held that the frenzied dancers represent the ancestral ghosts, whatever was asked for was at once handed to them. I was assured that whatever they ate or drank made no difference to the dancers; it was the ghost that was benefited. The women therefore could not become intoxicated. Some both drank themselves and forced it on their male friends.

**THE END**

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